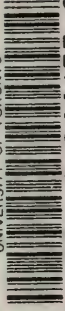


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Robert Ferguson!

Engraved for Chapman & Lang's Edition of Ferguson's Poems 1800.

THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
ROBERT FERGUSSON,
WITH THE
LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.



BY DAVID IRVING.



Embellished with three elegant Engravings.

Chapman and Lang's Edition.



GLASGOW,
Printed by and for Chapman and Lang,



1800.

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THE
LIFE OF FERGUSSON.

IT is to be wished, that the life of this unfortunate poet had been delineated by some one possessed of more ample information, than the present writer, with all his endeavours, has been able to procure. An impartial account of his short and headlong career, might be rendered not only highly interesting, but even of considerable advantage to society. By presenting to the eyes of inexperience, a faithful picture of the evils by which imprudent conduct is ever accompanied, it might possibly excite in young and susceptible minds, a steady aversion to those practices which tended to involve Fergusson in the deepest calamities.

As little curiosity has hitherto been discovered with regard to his history, the collecting of materials for the following sketch, has been attended with some difficulty. In the performance of this task, I have been chiefly aided by the friendly exertions of Dr. Robert Anderson, a gentleman, not more distinguished for his ingenuity and learning, than for the amiable benevolence of his mind*.

* Dr. Anderson, who has already deserved so well from the republic of letters, is now preparing for the press, an improved edition of his *Lives of the British Poets* detached from the complete collection of their respective works.

September 1751

Robert Fergusson was born at Edinburgh on the 5th of September, 1750. His father, William Fergusson, who, in his youth had discovered some propensity to the study of poetry, maintained a respectable character in the humble station in which Providence had placed him. He served an apprenticeship to a merchant in Aberdeen, and about the year 1746, came to Edinburgh, in order to find employment. Having been engaged as a clerk by several different masters, and these too, of various occupations, he at length procured a situation in the office of the British Linen Company, in which he continued till his death.

Young Fergusson was of a constitution so extremely delicate, that he could not go to school till he had reached his sixth year. He was then sent to a Mr. Philips, who, at that time resided in Black-friars Wynd; and under his tuition he was qualified for the High School, in the space of little more than six months. While he continued here, the infirm state of his health prevented him from giving the proper attendance: yet by means of his superior capacity, aided by a generous spirit of emulation, he excelled most of his companions. It was during those intervals in which the delicacy of his frame confined him at home, that he first discovered a relish for reading. He gratified his taste in this respect, by the perusal of such books as chance threw in his way; and the interrogations which he put concerning any subject that attracted his notice, often puzzled those who were much older than himself. The Proverbs of Solomon were his earliest favourite.

Having continued four years at the Grammar School of Edinburgh, he was next removed to that of Dundee, where he remained two years longer. In both of these seminaries he made a surprising progress

He was originally intended for the church, and his friends were so fortunate as to procure him a bursary in the University of St. Andrews, where he entered as a student at the age of thirteen. Here, he soon became distinguished as a youth of a very superior genius, and rendered himself conspicuous among his brother collegians as “a fellow of infinite jest, and most excellent fancy.” He is said to have recommended himself to the favour of Dr. Wilkie, who was then Professor of Natural Philosophy, in that University. Some have even reported that Wilkie frequently employed him to read his academical prelections, when sickness, or other casual circumstances prevented him from performing that duty himself. But this report must be better authenticated, before it can gain any credit. A boy of sixteen or seventeen years of age, mounting the professorial rostrum, would afford a somewhat curious exhibition.

He was never very remarkable for his application to study: yet he went through the various exercises which the rules of his college prescribed, with a sufficient degree of applause. There is reason to believe that his natural propensity for mirth and gaiety often caused him to relax in his exertions. He bore a principal part in a thousand youthful frolics; many of which are still remembered at St. Andrews.

During his residence at the University, he began to cultivate those poetical talents which nature had implanted in his soul; and besides composing various little pieces, he there formed the plan of a tragedy, entitled “Sir William Wallace,” and even finished the two first acts. For some reason or other, he did not persevere in his design: nor is there a single verse of this juvenile production extant. Upon one of the

blank leaves of a book which was formerly in his possession, there are indeed two or three speeches in his own hand-writing, but these seem rather to be intended as part of some other dramatic attempt*. The following are all the lines that can be distinctly read:

Therefore 'tis meet that Sisera be crown'd
 With all the honour worthy of his service,
 And that this day for mirth be set apart
 To celebrate the deeds, and valiant acts
 Display'd by him in war.

Conquest alone, my liege, rewards our toil:
 But since it is your sovereign inclination
 This day to grace us with a pompous triumph,
 As swift as thought my deeds shall fly to serve
 In all your after battles.

Upon the expiration of his bursary, he returned home, after having resided at St. Andrews for the space of four years. He now abandoned all thoughts of prosecuting the study of Divinity. The perpetual restraint which the sacred profession necessarily imposes, was not at all agreeable to one of his turn of mind; and without submitting to this restraint, he knew he should expose himself to the anathemas of those who, on every occasion, stand prepared to wrest the vindictive thunder from the hands of Omnipotence.

As he had been deprived of his father two years be-

* The book is intitled, "A Defence of the Church Government, Faith, Worship, and Spirit of the Presbyterians. By John Anderson, M. A."—Mr. Anderson was the grandfather of the late Professor Anderson of Glasgow. Boyse wrote an elegy upon his death. Upon another blank leaf of the same book, Fergusson has designed himself "Student of Divinity," from which it would appear that he had been entered a Civis of the Theological class.

fore, his prospects were now very gloomy. His mother was not in a situation to maintain him at home; and he could never fix upon any determinate plan of future employment. His liberal education might have fitted him for the duties of a tutor: but it may readily be supposed, that his ingenuous mind revolted at the idea of perpetual dependence.

He had an uncle living near Aberdeen, a Mr. John Forbes, who was in pretty affluent circumstances. To him he paid a visit, in hopes of procuring some suitable employment through his influence. Mr. Forbes at first treated him with civility; but instead of exerting himself to promote his interest, suffered him to remain six months in his house, and then dismissed him in a manner which reflects very little honour on his memory. His clothes were beginning to assume a thread-bare appearance; and on this account he was deemed an improper guest for his uncle's house. Filled with indignation at the unworthy treatment he had received, he retired to a little solitary inn, which stood at a small distance; and having procured pen, ink and paper, wrote him a letter full of the most manly sentiments. After his departure, Mr. Forbes began to relent, and dispatched a messenger to him with a few shillings to bear his expences upon the road. This paltry present, the lowness of his funds compelled him to accept. He set out for Edinburgh on foot, and at length reached his mother's house. The fatigues of the journey, added to the depression of his mind, had such an effect upon his delicate constitution, that for two or three days he was confined to bed. When he began to recover a little more strength, he endeavoured to console his grief by composing his poem on *The*

Decay of Friendship, and that Against Repining at Fortune.

Shortly after the above occurrence, he was employed in the Commissary Clerk's Office, but being unable to submit to the tyranny of the deputy, he soon relinquished his situation. Having remained for a considerable while without any occupation, he was next received into the Sheriff Clerk's Office, in which he continued during the rest of his lifetime.

The report of his having attempted the study of the Law, seems to be devoid of all foundation. There is surely a very material distinction betwixt studying Law, and transcribing Law-papers, at so much a page. Indeed this science could never have possessed any charms for a young man of his lively fancy. The experience of former ages had shewn, that Poetry and Law, are things too heterogeneous in their nature, ever to unite in the same individual. 'Tis a somewhat curious fact, that several very eminent poets were originally destined for the bar, and after having for a short time submitted to the preparatory study, at length abandoned it in disgust. Among this number we find the illustrious names of Tasso, Ariosto, Petrarch, Corneille and Rowe.

By proper application to business he might now have gained a comfortable subsistence: but unfortunately he considered the duties of his office as only of inferior moment. He employed himself principally either in the cultivation of his poetical talents, or in such amusements as lay within his reach.

Long before he had completed his twentieth year, many of his little pieces made their appearance in Ruddiman's Weekly Magazine, a well conducted miscellany, which was enriched with the vernal blos-

soms of Anderson, Græme and Bruce.—To trace him through the whole of his poetical career, would be productive of very little entertainment. His poems are too numerous to admit of a particular enumeration. Most of the subjects on which he wrote were suggested by the occurrences of the day.

Upon Sir John Fielding's attempt to prohibit the representation of the *Beggar's Opera*, he addressed a satirical epistle to that active magistrate. In this instance he seems to have acted from mistaken motives; for the conduct of Sir John in endeavouring to prevent the pernicious consequences which were frequently known to result from the representation of this drama, must certainly be regarded as highly laudable. Nor is his panegyric upon Gay authorised by the uniform tenor of that poet's writings. Gay in some of his poems, is not only immoral, but even obscene.

In order to ridicule the sesquipedalian style of Dr. Johnson, he presented him with *Food for a new Edition of his Dictionary*. This poem contains something risible enough; but it was not by the attack of such an adversary that the reputation of that mighty genius could be in the least injured:

— telumque imbellè sine ictu
Conjecit.

Virgil, *Æneid.* 2.

In a poem entitled *An Expedition to Fife*, he happened to cast some reflections on that district, branding it as “the most unhallowed ’midst the Scotian plains.” This aspersion drew a formal challenge from a Fifeshire gentleman, who, as it would appear, was feelingly alive to the honour of his county. But in-

stead of accepting his antagonist's invitation, he treated it with that contempt which it so justly merited.

The public immediately began to discover the real value of his productions; and from the time of their first appearance in the Weekly Magazine, he was regarded as a poet of very superior talents. His company was now courted by people of almost every description; for it is no uncommon opinion, that the acquaintance of men of genius and learning atones for the want of these qualities in ourselves. To the circles where gaiety and humour prevailed, his conversation recommended itself by every possible charm; and where a more grave deportment was necessary, he could accommodate his manners to those of the company. But from the caresses of an hour, he could derive no solid advantage. Notwithstanding the admiration which his genius excited, he was never so fortunate as to find any one to patronize his rising merit. His present situation was far from being agreeable: he had been left poor by his father, and the mode of conduct which he pursued was but ill calculated for placing him in affluence.

The miseries of a young man of genius and sensibility, who thus found himself upon the vast theatre of human life, without friends to shelter him from the storms of adversity, and with scarce one ray of hope to brighten his future prospects, may be more easily conceived than described.

Hard is the scholar's lot, condemn'd to sail
 Unpatroniz'd o'er life's tempestuous wave;
 Clouds blind his sight; nor blows a friendly gale,
 To waft him to one port, except the grave.

In 1773 he published a collection of his poems, consisting of such pieces as had appeared in Ruddiman's Magazine, with the addition of some others. During the course of the same year, a complimentary epistle with the signature of J. S. was addressed to him in the above mentioned Magazine. To this he made a suitable reply through the same channel.

In 1774 his friends prevailed upon him to compose a pastoral poem to the memory of Mr. Cunningham, a writer who will continue to be admired as long as there remains the least relish for elegant simplicity. It was published for the benefit of the unfortunate author, who was then verging towards that state of insanity, in which he at length closed his miserable existence.* As he was then incapable of superintending the press, some of his friends kindly undertook that office. This poem was the last of his productions.

The latter part of his life was spent in almost perpetual dissipation. The pleasures of the social bowl were a temptation which he was unable to resist: and indeed, the unpleasant situation of his affairs might induce him to grasp at every object that promised a temporary alleviation of his cares. He, in a great measure, neglected his profession; and associated with men of very dissolute manners, several of whom are mentioned in his *Last Will*, and the *Codicil* to it. From an epigram to be found among his posthumous pieces, it appears that at one time or other he had conceived the design of abandoning the scene of his follies and trying his fortune at sea. He formed many other projects of a like nature, but could never acquire a sufficient degree of resolution to carry any of them into effect.

* Anderson's Life of Cunningham.

There is one anecdote concerning him which must not be passed over in silence; an anecdote which every reader must delight to hear, and every biographer feel a secret pleasure in relating. He had contracted an intimacy with a gentleman of the name of Burnet, who afterwards went to the East Indies. Mr. Burnet was so captivated with his amiable manners, that when he had properly arranged his own affairs, he resolved to provide for his unfortunate friend. In pursuance of this laudable design, he sent him a very cordial invitation to come over to India, and at the same time remitted a draught of a hundred pounds, for defraying the expences he might incur in preparing for the voyage. But, alas! this bounty came too late; for he had then paid the debt of nature. Yet although Mr. Burnet's benevolent intentions were thus defeated by the stroke of death, it may still afford him a very pleasing reflection, that, of all those who were acquainted with the merits of Fergusson, he was the only person that stretched forth his hand in order to rescue him from the uncomfortable situation in which he spent the greater part of his life. Such an action reflects honour on humanity.

Though he had lived for several years in the midst of dissipation, yet the force of vicious habits was not entirely able to efface those serious impressions which had been the effects of a religious education. The following anecdote is related by Mr. Campbell. "It happened in the autumn of 1774, while on a visit to a friend in the neighbourhood of Haddington, that one day as young Fergusson was sauntering near the churchyard of that town, that a person of a sudden joined him, who accosted him in a polite and familiar manner. The solemnity of the scene naturally suggested

a conversation, rather of a moral cast, which by degrees became abstract and gloomy. This stranger turned out to be a pious Divine, of the sect called Seceders from the church of Scotland; his name was Brown, author of several works in Divinity, well known among the true believers of that sect. Mortality and a judgment to come were the topics our Divine chose to expatiate on, and bring home to Fergusson. These topics seemed to sink deep in the mind of our poet, and they parted; the one convinced that he had found a lost sheep, the other that he had been led too far astray, to find favour in the sight of the chief Shepherd of Israel. He returned to his mother's house in all the agonies of religious horror; and soon sunk into a state of complete despondency*."

This account of the matter is not altogether accurate†. The above incident did not occur in 1774, but almost two years before that period. 'Tis true, his conversation with the Rev. Mr. Brown had then made some impression upon his mind; but that impression lasted for a very short while. Nor did his insanity proceed from any such cause as is here assigned. Those who are acquainted with the manner in which he spent the latter part of his life, will scarcely be at a loss in accounting for those misfortunes which at length befel him. He sunk into a state of religious

* Introduction to the History of Poetry in Scotland.

† The writer of these pages having had occasion to experience Mr. Campbell's politeness, is extremely sorry in finding himself under the necessity of informing the public, that several other anecdotes of Fergusson, contained in his Introduction to the History of Poetry in Scotland, are far from being accurately stated. This circumstance is easily accounted for. Mr. Campbell received his information from our poet's sister; but instead of committing it to writing upon the spot, he trusted solely to memory.

despondency; but previous to that event his body was emaciated by disease, and his mind totally unhinged. His relations began to observe in his behaviour something of an infantine cast: he talked in an incoherent manner, and often manifested an entire vacillation of thought. Persons in his condition must generally have some leading object to engross their attention, and religion happened to present itself to him. His favourite studies were now neglected: he laid every other book aside, and made the Bible his constant companion.

Such of his manuscripts as were in his own possession, he committed indiscriminately to the flames, and was heard to declare, that he felt some consolation in never having written any thing against religion.

From the following anecdote the reader will receive a juster idea of his situation, than the most diffuse description can convey. He was one day met below the North Bridge by a gentleman with whom he had formerly been very intimately connected; and as he seemed to pass on quite regardless of every surrounding object, his friend accosted him, and demanded of him whither he was going. He replied he had just discovered one of the reprobates who crucified our Saviour, and that in order to have him disposed of according to law, he was making all possible haste to lodge the information with Lord Kames,—who by the way, if a judgment may be formed from his writings, would not have been very warm in the cause.

Having experienced a kind of temporary relief from his dreadful malady, he again began to visit his friends; but had one night the misfortune to fall from a staircase, and receive a violent contusion on the head. When carried home, he could give no account of the accident, and seemed altogether insensible of his own

situation. His brain was evidently disordered; and he at last became so outrageous, that it was not without some difficulty that two or three men could restrain his violence.

As his afflicted mother was not in a condition to command the proper attendance in her own house, she was under the necessity of having him removed to the public asylum. A few of his most intimate friends having watched a favourable opportunity, found means to get him conveyed thither, by decoying him into a chair, as if he had been about to pay some evening visit. When they reached the place of their destination, all was wrapt in profound silence. The poor youth entered the dismal mansion. He cast his eyes wildly round, and began to perceive his real situation. The discovery awaked every feeling of his soul. He raised a hideous shout, which being instantly returned by the wretched inhabitants of every cell, echoed along the vaulted roofs. His companions stood aghast at the dreadful scene: the impression which it made upon their minds was too deep for time ever to efface.

Having consigned him to the care of the keeper, they withdrew.—When he was afterwards visited by his mother and elder sister, his phrensy had almost entirely subsided. He had at first imagined himself a king or some other great personage; and adorned his head with a crown of straw, which he plaited very neatly with his own hands. The delusion, however, was now vanished: upon their entering, they found him lying in his cell, to appearance calm and collected. He told them he was sensible of their kindness, and hoped he should soon be in a condition to receive their visits. He also recalled to their memory the presentiment which he had so often expressed, of his being

at length overwhelmed by this most dreadful of all calamities: but endeavoured to comfort them with assurances of his being humanely treated in the asylum. He entreated his sister to bring her work, and frequently sit by him, in order to dispel the gloom that overcast his mind. To all this they could only answer with their sighs and tears.—When the keeper entered, and informed them that it was time to depart, he with great earnestness conjured them to remain with him a little longer: but with this request it was not in their power to comply.

From his behaviour during this interview, his mother was led to entertain hopes of his speedy recovery. A remittance from her son Henry having now rendered her more easy in her circumstances, she determined to remove him to her own house, and immediately began to arrange matters for his reception. But alas, these hopes were only delusive! for within the space of a few days, a messenger brought her the melancholy tidings that her beloved son had breathed his last. The violent exertions of his mind had gradually ruined the animal system; and in the end, his strength was so much exhausted, that he expired without a groan. He died on the sixteenth of October, 1774, after having continued about two months in the public asylum. His remains were decently interred in the Cannongate church-yard; and for a considerable time, there was no stone to mark the place of his dust. Posterity will find some difficulty in persuading themselves that after the inhabitants of a wealthy metropolis had neglected to erect a monument to his memory, this honour at last devolved upon a private individual, whose pecuniary resources were, at that time scarcely adequate to his generous intentions. The be-

haviour of Robert Burns upon this occasion will ever be remembered to his honour.—But he now stands in need of the same tribute of affection, which he once paid to the memory of his unfortunate predecessor.

Upon one side of the stone, he caused the following epitaph to be engraven:

No sculptur'd marble here, nor pompous lay!
 No storied urn, nor animated bust!
 This simple stone directs pale Scotia's way,
 To pour her sorrows o'er her poet's dust.

The other side contains this inscription:

By special grant of the Managers
 To ROBERT BURNS, who erected this stone,
 This burial place is ever to remain sacred to the memory of
 ROBERT FERGUSSON.

With regard to his learning, it cannot reasonably be supposed to have been very extensive. It appears from his writings, that he had a pretty general acquaintance with the English poets; of whom his greatest favourites were Shakespeare, Thomson, Pope and Cunningham. His acquaintance with ancient Scottish poetry seems to have been rather limited: according to Mr. Pinkerton, it did not extend beyond Ramsay's *Ever Green*.* His manner of life was unfavourable to the acquisition of general knowledge. He was wont to express the most sovereign contempt for the speculations of Logic, Metaphysics and Mathematics; a strong presumption that he was but slightly acquainted with them. Poets have seldom any relish for these abstract sciences: the art which they cultivate delights in giving

To airy nothings
 A local habitation and a name; †

* Ancient Scottish Poems, Vol. 1.

† Shakespeare.

not in contemplating objects of pure intellection. Gray, with all his learning, was almost entirely ignorant of the mathematical sciences.

As to his person, he was about the middle stature, and of a slender make. His countenance, which in other respects had a tendency towards effeminacy, was rendered highly animated by the expression of his large black eyes. His manner was genteel, and free from every species of affectation.

It is agreed by all those who knew him, that his character was of the most amiable kind. To the most sprightly fancy, he joined the more endearing qualities of modesty, a gentle temper, and the greatest goodness of heart. Such was the benevolence of his disposition, that he would often bestow his last farthing upon those who solicited his charity. His surviving relations retain a pleasing remembrance of his dutiful behaviour towards his parents: and the tender regard with which his memory is still cherished by his numerous acquaintance, fully demonstrates his value as a friend. Till his dissipated manner of life had in a great measure eradicated all sense of delicacy or propriety, he always shewed himself possessed of a manly spirit of independence. It ought to be recorded to his honour, that he never disgraced his Muse with the servile strain of panegyric: he flattered no illiterate peer, nor sacrificed his sincerity, in order to advance his interest.

It must not, however, be concealed, that his virtues were tainted with glaring imperfections. He was an utter stranger to temperance and sobriety, without which, no character can be proposed as an example worthy of imitation.—Yet over his frailties let huma-

nity drop a tear: let his virtues alone be remembered, and his vices permitted to sink into oblivion.

He had two sisters, Barbara, and Margaret, both of whom are still living in Edinburgh. The former is married to Mr. David Inverarity, cabinet-maker, Canal-street, the latter to Mr. Duval, a purser in the navy. His elder brother Henry, who has already been mentioned, was a young man of considerable learning and ingenuity. He had been bound an apprentice to a merchant in Edinburgh; but being led astray by vicious company, was under the necessity of entering on board a man of war. As his friends have had no accounts of him for a great number of years, they have long ago abandoned all hopes of ever seeing him again. A letter of his to his brother, dated Tartar, in Rapahannock river, Virginia, 8th of October, 1773, has already been laid before the public, and may with sufficient propriety be inserted here.

“Since the beginning of last month, when I was favoured with yours of the 1st February, 1773, I have been in most rivers in this province and Maryland. Our business was to look out after smugglers; and had we been as active in that duty as others on the American station, I might have been enabled to make my appearance in a brilliant manner: but, alas! only a sloop of 80 tons from the West Indies, loaden with coffee and sugar, fell to our lot. I had sixteen dollars for my share, three of which I gave towards buying a tender, and every fore-mast man paid one. The tender is now manned, armed, and cruizing Chesapeak bay, and I am convinced cannot fail of taking prizes, if the officers appointed for that duty are attentive.

We had the most severe winter at Halifax ever ex-

perienced in that country. The harbour, though three miles across, was frozen over for three weeks. The ship's company walked aboard and ashore, nay, all our provisions were got aboard on the ice (which in many places was thirty-six feet in thickness) notwithstanding the strong north-west winds which blow most of the winter.

When we arrived at Boston, we were ordered to this country, which has been as hot this summer as the former was cold in winter. Such a change of climate could not fail to create sickness in the ship's company: but, thank God, only three have died, one a natural death, and the other two drowned.

I had a very severe fit of sickness at our first coming here; but being so much given to sweating, it proved an effectual cure, although I am very weak through that means. I never lived so badly, as aboard here in point of provisions, every species being the worst of their kinds, and neither butter nor flour to be had.

I desire you will write by the packet on receipt; for if you lay hold of any other opportunity, your letter will be too late; the ship being positively ordered home early next spring, to my great satisfaction, being quite tired of a life that my past follies drove me to, and to which I have served too long an apprenticeship. If every thing does not succeed to my satisfaction, on my arrival in England, I am fully bent to return and settle in this country; having had the fairest offers imaginable, could my discharge have been procured. In Virginia and Maryland, in particular, I could do best by acting in a double capacity, by learning (teaching) the small sword, and the exercise of the small arms, there being no regular forces in either province, and

the officers of the militia being quite ignorant themselves of that part of their duty.

I desire it as a favour, you would often examine your poetical pieces before you commit them to the press. This advice I hope you will the more readily take, as most young authors are apt to be more criticised than those who have had a little experience. Pope himself, was one of the most careful in this respect, and none as yet ever surpassed him. When I arrive in England, I shall give you the necessary directions how to send your works, and make no doubt of selling them to advantage, when the ship is paid off.

I am sorry to hear of J. Wright's death: he was a worthy young lad, and one I had a true regard for.

Thick Peter, I hope by this time is recovered. I should be glad to hear of Robertson and Addison's success: The latter, if in Edinburgh, I desire to be kindly remembered to. I should also be happy to hear how Sandie Young, and John Coomans do, having often experienced their kindness, and been happy in their company.

In our passage from Boston to Hampton, we had a very narrow escape with our lives, being surrounded with one of the largest water spouts ever seen, which blackened the sky for some leagues, and, had we not barely weathered it, would have sunk the ship and every soul aboard.

Remember me in the strongest manner to my mother, Peggy, Raritiès, Father Parker, &c. &c. If you want either to succeed, or gain esteem, be very careful of what company you keep. This advice I hope you will take, as it comes from one who has lost himself merely through inattention in that respect. Believe me, it is impossible to write you as I would chuse,

being environed with twenty thousand noisy plagues, not to mention execrations so horrid, that would make the greatest blackguard in Edinburgh's hair stand erect. I hope you'll make it your particular care, to study such branches of education as may prove most conducive to your future happiness, and appear at least once every Sunday in church (I mean the church of Scotland) for how can you spend your time better? I was, like many, fond of the church of England's forms, &c. But having been in many Romish churches since, find these forms are merely the * * * of laziness, and differ but very little from one another: this you can be convinced of, in perusing a Romish mass-book in English."

The following is also an extract of another of his letters to his brother. The date is torn away, but it appears to have been written from Edinburgh.

"I read with attention, the burial-letter you versified, and your poetical letter to the cripple laureat. The former I approve of, but cannot recommend the latter in point of rhyme. You'll please notice, that the three first and fifth, and the second and fourth lines in compositions of this kind, (such as Habbie Simpson, &c. chime with one another.

At first when I came here, I imagined when one spoke of entering at a precise time, that he was scrupulous; but now I see the contrary, and that their promises are only to tantalize me: for ever since the year 1601, that the court sat here, the Edinburghers have retained some of its fashions, and among the rest, flattery to a high degree.

I have only eight scholars, but expect more*. God grant they may not prove like one Campbell, who bilk'd me out of 2l. 2s. for instructions I gave him upon one foot. Although he has done me much evil, yet I shall not pray for him in the manner Paul, or some other apostle, did for Alexander the copper-smith."

* He occasionally taught the use of the sword; and likewise published a treatise on that subject.—For the above letter, as well as for several particulars contained in this narrative, I am indebted to the kindness of Mr. James Inverarity, one of Fergusson's nephews.



17th October 1774.—At Edinburgh Mr. Robert Fergusson, author of a collection of Poems and of several others mostly interesting and in the Scottish language.—Scots Magazine.—

His tombstone bears that he died on
16th October 1774.—

CRITIQUE
ON
FERGUSSON'S WORKS.

THE reputation of Fergusson as a Poet rests almost solely upon the merit of his Scottish compositions. To such of his pieces as are written in English, very little praise is due: in some of them, indeed, it is easy to discover marks of genius; but the greater part appear to have been the earliest productions of his Muse, and are neither distinguished by originality of thought, nor superior harmony of versification.

His eclogues, entitled *Morning, Noon, and Night*, exhibit the general characteristics of the modern pastoral; the numbers are sufficiently smooth, but the sentiments trite and common. The reader meets with nothing that captivates his fancy, or interests his feelings. Many passages are extremely puerile. It would be difficult to produce from the writings of any poet whatsoever, a more tautological verse than the following:

Gentle in spring-time, and in summer mild.

The Complaint is likewise a very meagre production: it is scarcely superior to the strains of a free-mason song.

There is something in the nature of pastoral poetry, which seems to preclude all hopes of succeeding in that species of composition: The life of a shepherd ad-

Poems.

PASTORAL I.

MORNING.

DAMON.—ALEXIS.

DAMON.

AURORA now her welcome visit pays,
Stern darkness flies before her cheerful rays;
Cool circling breezes whirl along the air,
And early shepherds to the fields repair;
Lead we our flocks, then, to the mountain's brow,
Where junipers and thorny brambles grow;
Where founts of water 'midst the daisies spring,
And soaring larks and tuneful linnets sing;
Your pleasing song shall teach our flocks to stray,
While sounding echoes smoothe the sylvan lay.

Alex. 'Tis thine to sing the graces of the morn,
The zephyr trembling o'er the rip'ning corn;
'Tis thine with ease to chant the rural lay,
While bubbling fountains to your numbers play.
No piping swain that treads the verdant field,
But to your music and your verse must yield;
Sing then,—for here we may with safety keep
Our sportive lambkins on this mossy steep.

Dam. With ruddy glow the sun adorns the land,
The pearly dew-drops on the bushes stand;
The lowing oxen from the folds we hear,
And snowy flocks upon the hills appear.

Alex. How sweet the murmurs of the neighb'ring rill!
Sweet are the slumbers which its floods distill:
Thro' pebbly channels winding as they run,
And brilliant sparkling to the rising sun.

Dam. Behold Edina's lofty turrets rise,
Her structures fair adorn the eastern skies;
As Pentland's cliffs o'ertop yon distant plain,
So she the cities on our north domain.

Alex. Boast not of cities, or their lofty tow'rs,
Where Discord all her baneful influence pours;
The homely cottage, and the wither'd tree,
With sweet Content, shall be preferr'd by me.

Dam. The hemlock dire shall please the heifer's taste,
Our lands like wild Arabia be waste;
'The bee forget to range for winter's food,
Ere I forsake the forest and the flood.

Alex. Ye balmy breezes! wave the verdant field;
Clouds! all your bounties, all your moisture yield;
That fruits and herbage may our farms adorn,
And furrow'd ridges teem with loaded corn.

Dam. The year already hath propitious smil'd,
Gentle in spring-time, and in summer mild;
No cutting blasts have hurt my tender dams,
No hoary frosts destroy'd my infant lambs.

Alex. If Ceres crown with joy the bounteous year,
A sacred altar to her shrine I'll rear;
A vig'rous ram shall bleed, whose curling horns,
His woolly neck and hardy front adorns.

Dam. Teach me, O PAN! to tune the slender reed,
No fav'rite ram shall at thine altars bleed;
Each breathing morn thy woodland verse I'll sing,
And hollow dens shall with the numbers ring.

Alex. APOLLO, lend me thy celestial lyre,
The woods in concert join at thy desire:

At morn, at noon, at night, I'll tune the lay,
And bid fleet Echo bear the sound away.

Dam. Sweet are the breezes, when cool eve returns,
To lowing herds, when raging Syrius burns;
Not half so sweetly winds the breeze along,
As does the murmur of your pleasing song.

Alex. To hear your strains the cattle spurn their food,
The feather'd songsters leave their tender brood;
Around your seat the silent lambs advance,
And scrambling he-goats on the mountains dance.

Dam. But haste, ALEXIS, reach yon leafy shade,
Which mantling ivy round the oaks hath made;
There we'll retire, and list the warbling note
That flows melodious from the blackbird's throat;
Your easy numbers shall his songs inspire,
And ev'ry warbler join the gen'ral choir.



PASTORAL II.

N O O N.

CORYDON.—TIMANTHES.

CORYDON.

THE sun the summit of his orb hath gain'd,
No flecker'd clouds his azure path hath stain'd;
Our pregnant ewes around us cease to graze,
Stung with the keenness of his sultry rays;
The weary bullock from the yoke is led,
And youthful shepherds from the plains are fled
To dusky shades, where scarce a glimm'ring ray
Can dart its lustre thro' the leafy spray.
Yon cooling riv'let where the waters gleam,
Where springing flow'rs adorn the limpid stream,

Invites us where the drooping willow grows,
To guide our flocks, and take a cool repose.

Tim. To thy advice a grateful ear I'll lend,
The shades I'll court where slender osiers bend;
Our weanlings young shall crop the rising flow'r,
While we retire to yonder twining bow'r;
The woods shall echo back thy cheerful strains,
Admir'd by all our Caledonian swains.

Cor. There have I oft with gentle DELIA stray'd,
Amidst th' embow'ring solitary shade;
Before the gods to thwart my wishes strove,
By blasting every pleasing glimpse of love:
For Delia wanders o'er the Anglian plains
Where civil discord and sedition reigns.
There Scotia's sons in odious light appear,
'Tho' we for them have wav'd the hostile spear;
For them my sire, enwrapp'd in curdled gore,
Breath'd his last moments on a foreign shore.

Tim. Six lunar months, my friend, will soon expire,
And she return to crown your fond desire.
For her, O rack not your desponding mind!
In Delia's breast a gen'rous flame's confin'd,
That burns for Corydon, whose piping lay
Hath caus'd the tedious moments steal away:
Whose strains melodious mov'd the falling floods
To whisper Delia to the rising woods.
O! if your sighs could aid the floating gales,
That favourably swell their lofty sails,
Ne'er should your sobs their rapid flight give o'er
Till Delia's presence grac'd our northern shore.

Cor. Tho' Delia greet my love, I sigh in vain,
Such joy unbounded can I ne'er obtain.
Her sire a thousand fleeces numbers o'er,
And grassy hills increase his milky store;

While the weak fences of a scanty fold
Will all my sheep and fatt'ning lambkins hold.

Tim. Ah, hapless youth! although the early muse
Painted her semblance on thy youthful brows;
'Tho' she with laurels twin'd thy temples round,
And in thy ear distill'd the magic sound;
A cheerless poverty attends thy woes,
Your song melodious unrewarded flows.

Cor. Think not, TIMANTHES, that for wealth I pine,
'Tho' all the fates to make me poor combine;
TAX bounding o'er his banks with awful sway,
Bore all my corns and all my flocks away.
Of Jove's dread precepts did I e'er complain?
E'er curse the rapid flood or dashing rain?
Ev'n now I sigh not for my former store,
But wish the gods had destin'd Delia poor.

Tim. 'Tis joy, my friend, to think I can repay
The loss you bore by Autumn's rigid sway.
Yon fertile meadow where the daisies spring
Shall yearly pasture to your heifers bring:
Your flock with mine shall on yon mountain feed,
Cheer'd by the warbling of your tuneful reed:
No more shall Delia's ever-fretful sire
Against your hopes and ardent love conspire.
Rous'd by her smiles you'll tune the happy lay,
While hills responsive waft your songs away.

Cor. May plenteous crops your irksome labour crown,
May hoodwink'd Fortune cease her envious frown;
May riches still increase with growing years;
Your flocks be numerous as your silver hairs.

Tim. But, lo! the heat invites us at our ease
To court the twining shades and cooling breeze;
Our languid joints we'll peaceably recline,
And midst the flow'rs and op'ning blossoms dine.

PASTORAL III.

NIGHT.

AMYNTAS.—FLORELLUS.

AMYNTAS.

WHILE yet grey twilight does his empire hold,
 Drive all our heifers to the peaceful fold;
 With sullied wing grim darkness soars along,
 And larks to nightingales resign the song:
 The weary ploughman flies the waving fields,
 To taste what fare his humble cottage yields:
 As bees that daily thro' the meadows roam:
 Feed on the sweets they have prepar'd at home.

Flor. The grassy meads that smil'd serenely gay,
 Cheer'd by the ever-burning lamp of day;
 In dusky hue attir'd, are cramp'd with colds,
 And springing flow'rets shut their crimson folds.

Am. What awful silence reigns throughout the shade,
 The peaceful olive bends his drooping head;
 No sound is heard o'er all the gloomy maze,
 Wide o'er the deep the fiery meteors blaze.

Flor. The west yet ting'd with Sol's effulgent ray,
 With feeble light illumines our homeward way;
 The glowing stars with keener lustre burn,
 While round the earth their glowing axles turn.

Am. What mighty power conducts the stars on high!
 Who bids these comets thro' our system fly!
 Who wafts the lightning to the icy pole!
 And thro' our regions bids the thunders roll?

Flor. But say, what mightier pow'r from nought
 The earth, the sun, and all that fiery maze [could raise
 Of distant stars that gild the azure sky,
 And thro' the void in settled orbits fly?

Am. That righteous pow'r before whose heavenly eye
The stars are nothing and the planets die;
Whose breath divine supports our mortal frame,
Who made the lion wild and lambkin tame.

Flor. At his command the bounteous spring returns;
Hot summer, raging o'er th' Atlantic burns;
The yellow autumn crowns our sultry toil;
And winter's snows prepare the cumb'rous soil.

Am. By him the morning darts his purple ray;
'To him the birds their early homage pay;
With vocal harmony the meadows ring,
While swains in concert heav'nly praises sing.

Flor. Sway'd by his word, the nutrient dew's descend,
And growing pastures to the moisture bend;
The vernal blossoms sip his falling showers;
The meads are garnish'd with his op'ning flowers.

Am. For man, the object of his chiefest care,
Fowls he hath form'd to wing the ambient air,
For him the steer his lusty neck doth bend;
Fishes for him their scaly fins extend.

Flor. Wide o'er the orient sky the moon appears,
A foe to darkness and his idle fears;
Around her orb the stars in clusters shine,
And distant planets tend her silver shrine.

Am. Hush'd are the busy numbers of the day;
On downy couch they sleep their hours away;
Hail, balmy Sleep, that soothes the troubled mind!
Lock'd in thy arms our cares a refuge find.
Oft do you tempt us with delusive dreams,
When wild'ring Fancy darts her dazzling beams;
Asleep the lover with his mistress strays
Thro' lonely thickets and untrodden ways.
But when pale Cynthia's sable empire's fled,
And hov'ring slumbers shun the morning bed,

Rous'd by the dawn, he wakes with frequent sigh,
And all his flattering visions quickly fly.

Flor. Now owls and bats infest the midnight scene,
Dire snakes invenom'd twine along the green;
Forsook by man the rivers mourning glide,
And groaning echoes swell the noisy tide,
Straight to our cottage let us bend our way;
My drowsy pow'rs confess sleep's magic sway.
Easy and calm upon our couch we'll lie,
While sweet reviving slumbers round our pillows fly.

THE COMPLAINT:

A PASTORAL.

NEAR the heart of a fair spreading grove,
Whose foliage shaded the green,
A shepherd, repining at love,
In anguish was heard to complain.

“ O Cupid! thou wanton young boy!
Since, with thy invisible dart,
Thou hast robb'd a fond youth of his joy,
In return grant the wish of his heart.

Send a shaft so severe from thy bow
(His pining, his sighs to remove,)
That STELLA, once wounded, may know
How keen are the arrows of love.

No swain once so happy as I,
Nor tun'd with more pleasure the reed;
My breast never vented a sigh,
Till STELLA approach'd the gay mead.

With mirth, with contentment endow'd,
 My hours they flew wantonly by;
 I sought no repose in the wood,
 Nor from my few sheep would I fly.

Now my reed I have carelessly broke,
 Its melody pleases no more;
 I pay no regard to a flock
 That seldom hath wander'd before.

O STELLA! whose beauty so fair
 Excels the bright splendor of day,
 Ah! have you no pity to share
 With DAMON thus fall'n to decay?

For you have I quitted the plain,
 Forsaken my sheep and my fold;
 For you in dull languor and pain,
 My tedious moments are told.

For you have my roses grown pale,
 They have faded untimely away;
 And will not such beauty bewail
 A shepherd thus fall'n to decay?

Since your eyes still requite me with scorn,
 And kill with their merciless ray,
 Like a star of the dawning of morn,
 I fall to their lustre a prey.

Some swain who shall mournfully go
 To whisper love's sigh to the shade,
 Will hap'ly some charity show,
 And under the turf see me laid,

Would my love but in pity appear
 On the spot where he moulds my cold grave,
 And bedew the green sod with a tear,
 'Tis all the remembrance I crave."

To the swaird then his visage he turn'd;
 'Twas wan as the lilies in May;
 Fair STELLA may see him inurn'd,
 He hath sigh'd all his sorrows away.



THE DECAY OF FRIENDSHIP.

A PASTORAL ELEGY.

WHEN gold, man's sacred deity, did smile,
 My friends were plenty, and my sorrows few;
 Mirth, love, and bumpers did my hours beguile,
 And arrow'd Cupids round my slumbers flew.
 What shepherd then could boast more happy days?
 My lot was envied by each humbler swain;
 Each bard in smooth eulogium sung my praise,
 And DAMON listen'd to the guileful strain.
 Flattery, alluring as the Syren's lay,
 And as deceitful thy enchanting tongue,
 How have you taught my wav'ring mind to stray,
 Charm'd and attracted by the baneful song?
 My pleasant cottage, shelter'd from the gale,
 Arose with moss, and rural ivy bound;
 And scarce a flow'ret in my lowly vale,
 But was with bees of various colours crown'd.
 Free o'er my lands the neighb'ring flocks could roam;
 How welcome were the swains and flocks to me!
 The shepherds kindly were invited home,
 To chace the hours in merriment and glee.
 To wake emotions in the youthful mind,
 Strephon with voice melodious tun'd the song;
 Each sylvan youth the sounding chorus join'd,
 Fraught with contentment 'midst the festive throng.

My clust'ring grape compens'd their magic skill,
 'The bowl capacious swell'd in purple tide;
 To shepherds, lib'ral as the crystal rill,
 Spontaneous gurgling from the mountain's side.

But, ah! these youthful sportive hours are fled;
 These scenes of jocund mirth are now no more;
 No healing slumbers 'tend my humble bed,
 No friends condole the sorrows of the poor.

And what avail the thoughts of former joy?
 What comfort bring they in the adverse hour?
 Can they the canker-worm of Care destroy,
 Or brighten Fortune's discontented lour?

He who hath long travers'd the fertile plain,
 Where Nature in its fairest vesture smil'd,
 Will he not cheerless view the fairy scene,
 When lonely wand'ring o'er the barren wild?

For now pale Poverty, with haggard eye
 And rueful aspect, darts her gloomy ray;
 My wonted guests their proffer'd aid deny,
 And from the paths of DAMON steal away.

Thus when fair Summer's lustre gilds the lawn,
 When rip'ning blossoms deck the spreading tree,
 The birds with melody salute the dawn,
 And o'er the daisy hangs the humming bee.

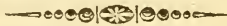
But when the beauties of the circling year
 In chilling frosts and furious storms decay;
 No more the bees upon the plains appear,
 No more the warblers hail the infant day.

To the lone corner of some distant shore,
 In dreary devious pilgrimage I'll fly,
 And wander pensive where Deceit no more
 Shall trace my footsteps with a mortal eye.

There solitary saunter o'er the beach,
 And to the murm'ring surge my griefs disclose;
 There shall my voice in plaintive wailings teach
 The hollow caverns to resound my woes.

Sweet are the waters to the parched tongue;
 Sweet are the blossoms to the wanton bee;
 Sweet to the shepherd sounds the lark's shrill song;
 But sweeter far is SOLITUDE to me.

Adieu! ye fields, where I have fondly stray'd,
 Ye swains, who once the fav'rite DAMON knew!
 Farewel, ye sharers of my bounty's aid!
 Ye sons of base Ingratitude, adieu!



AGAINST REPINING AT FORTUNE.

THO' in my narrow bounds of rural toil,
 No obelisk or splendid column rise;
 Tho' partial Fortune still averts her smile,
 And views my labours with condemning eyes;

Yet all the gorgeous vanity of state
 I can contemplate with a cool disdain;
 Nor shall the honours of the gay and great
 E'er wound my bosom with an envious pain.

Avails it aught the grandeur of their halls,
 With all the glories of the pencil hung,
 If Truth, fair Truth! within th'unhallow'd walls,
 Hath never whisper'd with her seraph tongue?

Avails it aught, if music's gentle lay
 Hath oft been echo'd by the sounding dome;
 If music cannot soothe their griefs away,
 Or change a wretched to a happy home?

Tho' Fortune should invest them with her spoils,
 And banish poverty with look severe,
 Enlarge their confines, and decrease their toils,
 Ah! what avails if she increase their care?

Tho' fickle she disclaim my moss-grown cot,
 Nature! thou look'st with more impartial eyes:
 Smile thou, fair goddess! on my sober lot;
 I'll neither fear her fall, nor court her rise.

When early larks shall cease the matin song:
 When Philomel at night resigns her lay;
 When melting numbers to the owl belong,
 Then shall the reed be silent in thy praise.

Can he, who with the tide of Fortune sails,
 More pleasure from the sweets of Nature share?
 Do zephyrs waft him more ambrosial gales,
 Or do his groves a gayer liv'ry wear?

To me the heav'ns unveil as pure a sky;
 To me the flow'rs as rich a bloom disclose;
 The morning beams as radiant to my eye,
 And darkness guides me to as sweet repose.

If Luxury their lavish dainties piles,
 And still attends upon their fated hours,
 Doth Health reward them with her open smiles,
 Or Exercise enlarge their feeble pow'rs?

'Tis not in richest mines of Indian gold,
 That man this jewel happiness can find,
 If his unfeeling breast to virtue cold,
 Denies her entrance to his ruthless mind.

Wealth, pomp and honour are but gaudy toys;
 Alas, how poor the pleasures they impart!
 Virtue's the sacred source of all the joys
 That claim a lasting mansion in the heart.

CONSCIENCE:

AN ELEGY.

————— Leave her to Heav'n,
 And to the thorns that in her bosom lodge,
 To prick and sting her. SHAKES.

No choiring warblers flutter in the sky,
 Phœbus no longer holds his radiant sway;
 While Nature, with a melancholy eye,
 Bemoans the loss of his departed ray.

O happy he, whose conscience knows no guile!
 He to the sable night can bid farewell;
 From cheerless objects close his eyes awhile,
 Within the silken folds of sleep to dwell.

Elysian dreams shall hover round his bed,
 His soul shall wing, on pleasing fancies borne,
 To shining vales where flow'rets lift their head,
 Wak'd by the breathing zephyrs of the morn.

But wretched he whose foul reproachful deeds
 Can thro' an angry conscience wound his rest;
 His eye too oft the balmy comfort needs,
 Tho' Slumber seldom knows him as her guest.

To calm the raging tumults of his soul,
 If wearied Nature should an hour demand,
 Around his bed the sheeted spectres howl,
 Red with revenge the grinning furies stand.

Nor state nor grandeur can his pain allay;
 Where shall he find a requiem to his woes?
 Pow'r cannot chase the frightful gloom away,
 Nor music lull him to a kind repose.

Where is the king that Conscience fears to chide?
 Conscience, that candid judge of right and wrong,
 Will o'er the secrets of each heart preside,
 Nor aw'd by pomp, nor tam'd by soothing song.



DAMON TO HIS FRIENDS.

THE billows of life are suppress'd,
 Its tumults, its toils disappear,
 To relinquish the storms that are past,
 I think on the sunshine that's near.

Dame Fortune and I are agreed;
 Her frowns I no longer endure;
 For the goddess has kindly decreed,
 That Damon no more shall be poor.

Now riches will ope the dim eyes,
 To view the increase of my store;
 And many my friendship will prize
 Who never knew Damon before.

But those I renounce and abjure,
 Who carried contempt in their eye;
 May poverty still be their dow'r,
 That could look on misfortune awry!

Ye pow'rs that weak mortals govern,
 Keep Pride at his bay from my mind;
 O let me not haughtily learn
 To despise the few friends that were kind.

For theirs was a feeling sincere,
 'Twas free from delusion and art;
 O may I that friendship revere,
 And hold it yet dear to my heart!

By which was I ever forgot?

It was both my physician and cure,
That still found the way to my cot,
Altho' I was wretched and poor:

'Twas balm to my canker-tooth'd care;
The wound of affliction it heal'd:
In distress it was Pity's soft tear,
And naked cold Poverty's shield.

Attend, ye kind youth of the plain!
Who oft with my sorrows condol'd;
You cannot be deaf to the strain,
Since Damon is master of gold.

I have chose a sweet sylvan retreat,
Bedeck'd with the beauties of spring;
Around my flocks nibble and bleat,
While the musical choristers sing.

I force not the waters to stand
In an artful canal at my door,
But a river, at Nature's command,
Meanders both limpid and pure.

She's the goddess that darkens my bow'rs
With tendrils of ivy and vine;
She tutors my shrubs and my flow'rs,
Her taste is the standard of mine.

What a pleasing diversified groupe
Of trees has she spread o'er my ground!
She has taught the grave *larix* to droop,
And the birch to deal odours around.

For whom has she perfum'd my groves?
For whom has she cluster'd my vine?
If friendship despise my alcoves,
'They'll ne'er be recesses of mine.

He who tastes his grape juices by stealth,
 Without chosen companions to share,
 Is the basest of slaves to his wealth,
 And the pitiful minion of Care.

O come, and with Damon retire
 Amidst the green umbrage embower'd;
 Your mirth and your songs to inspire,
 Shall the juice of his vintage be pour'd?

O come, ye dear friends of his youth!
 Of all his good fortune partake;
 Nor think 'tis departing from truth,
 To say 'twas preserv'd for your sake.



RETIREMENT.

COME, Inspiration, from thy vernal bow'r,
 To thy celestial voice attune the lyre;
 Smooth gliding strains in sweet profusion pour,
 And aid my numbers with seraphic fire.

Under a lonely spreading oak I lay,
 My head upon the daisied green reclin'd,
 The ev'ning sun beam'd forth his parting ray,
 The foliage bended to the hollow wind.

There gentle Sleep my acting pow'rs suppress,
 The city's distant hum was heard no more;
 Yet Fancy suffer'd not the mind to rest,
 Ever obedient to her wakeful pow'r.

She led me near a crystal fountain's noise,
 Where undulating waters sportive play;
 Where a young comely swain, with pleasing voice,
 In tender accents sung his sylvan lay.

- " Adieu, ye baneful pleasures of the town!
 " Farewell, ye giddy and unthinking throng!
 " Without regret your foibles I disown;
 " Themes more exalted claim the Muse's song.
- " Your stony hearts no social feelings share;
 " Your souls of distant sorrows ne'er partake;
 " Ne'er do you listen to the needy pray'r,
 " Nor drop a tear for tender pity's sake.
- " Welcome, ye fields, ye fountains, and ye groves!
 " Ye flow'ry meadows, and extensive plains!
 " Where soaring warblers pour their plaintive loves,
 " Each landscape cheering with their vocal strains.
- " Here rural Beauty rears her pleasing shrine;
 " She on the margin of each streamlet glows;
 " Where, with the blooming hawthorn roses twine,
 " And the fair lily of the valley grows.
- " Here Chastity may wander unassail'd
 " Thro' fields where gay seducers cease to rove;
 " Where open Vice o'er Virtue near prevail'd;
 " Where all is innocence, and all is love.
- " Peace with her olive wand triumphant reigns,
 " Guarding secure the peasant's humble bed;
 " Envy is banish'd from the happy plains,
 " And Defamation's busy tongue is laid.
- " Health and Contentment usher in the morn,
 " With jocund smiles they cheer the rural swain,
 " For which the Peer to pompous titles born,
 " Forsaken sighs, but all his sighs are vain.
- " For the calm comforts of an easy mind,
 " In yonder lonely cot delight to dwell,
 " And leave the statesmen for the lab'ring hind,
 " The regal palace for the lowly cell.

" Ye, who to Wisdom would devote your hours,
 " And far from riot, far from discord stray!
 " Look back disdainful on the city's tow'rs,
 " Where Pride, where Folly point the slipp'ry way.
 " Pure flows the limpid stream in crystal tides,
 " 'Thro' rocks, thro' dens, and ever verdant vales,
 " Till to the town's unhallow'd wall it glides,
 " Where all its purity and lustre fails."



ODE TO HOPE.

HOPE! lively cheerer of the mind,
 In lieu of real bliss design'd,
 Come from thy ever verdant bower
 To chace the dull and ling'ring hour;
 O! bring, attending on thy reign,
 All thy ideal fairy train;
 To animate the lifeless clay,
 And bear my sorrows hence away.

Hence gloomy-featur'd black Despair,
 With all thy frantic furies fly,
 Nor rend my breast with gnawing Care,
 For Hope in lively garb is nigh;

Let pining Discontentment mourn,
 Let dull-ey'd Melancholy grieve,
 Since pleasing Hope must reign by turn,
 And ev'ry bitter thought relieve.

O smiling Hope in adverse hour,
 I feel thy influencing power:

Tho' frowning Fortune fix my lot,
 In some defenceless lonely cot,
 Where Poverty, with empty hands,
 In pallid meagre aspect stands;
 Thou canst enrobe me, 'midst the great,
 With all the crimson pomp of state,
 Where Luxury invites his guests
 To pall them with his lavish feasts:
 What cave so dark, what gloom so drear,
 So black with horror, dead with fear!
 But thou canst dart thy streaming ray,
 And change close night to open day.

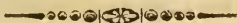
Health is attendant in thy radiant train,
 Round her the whisp'ring zephyrs gently play,
 Behold her gladly tripping o'er the plain,
 Bedeck'd with rural sweets and garlands gay.

When vital spirits are depress'd,
 And heavy languor clogs the breast,
 Comforting Hope! 'tis thine to cure,
 Devoid of Esculapian power;
 For oft thy friendly aid avails,
 When all the strength of physic fails.

Nay, even tho' death should aim his dart,
 I know he lifts his arm in vain,
 Since thou this lesson canst impart,
 Mankind but die to live again.

Depriv'd of thee must banners fall;
 But where a living Hope is found,
 The legions shout at danger's call,
 And vict'ries are triumphant crown'd.

Come then, bright Hope! in smiles array'd,
 Revive us by thy quick'ning breath,
 Then shall we never be afraid
 To walk thro' danger and thro' death.



THE RIVERS OF SCOTLAND:

AN ODE.

Set to music by Mr. COLLET.

OER Scotia's parched land the Naiads flew,
 From towering hills explor'd her shelter'd vales,
 Caus'd *Forth* in wild meanders please the view,
 And lift her waters to the zephyrs gales.

Where the glad swain surveys his fertile fields,
 And reaps the plenty which his harvest yields,
 Here did these lovely nymphs unseen,
 Oft wander by the river's side,
 And oft unbind their tresses green,
 To bathe them in the fluid tide.

Then to the shady grottoes would retire,
 And sweetly echo to the warbling choir:

Or to the rushing waters tune their shells,
 To call up Echo from the woods,
 Or from the rocks or crystal floods,
 Or from surrounding banks, or hills, or dales.

When the cool fountains first their springs forsook,
 Murmuring smoothly to the azure main,
 Exulting Neptune then his trident shook,
 And wav'd his waters gently to the plain.

The friendly Tritons on his chariot born,
 With cheeks dilated blew the hollow-sounding horn.

Now Lothian and Fife shores,
 Resounding to the Mermaid's song,
 Gladly emit their limpid stores,
 And bid them smoothly sail along

To Neptune's empire, and with him to roll
 Round the revolving sphere from pole to pole;

To guard Britannia from envious foes,
 To view her angry vengeance hurl'd
 In awful thunder round the world,
 And trembling nations bending to her blows.

CHORUS.

To guard Britannia from envious foes,
 To view her angry vengeance hurl'd,
 In awful thunder round the world,
 And trembling nations bending to her blows.

High towering on the zephyr's breezy wing,
 Swift fly the Naiads from Forth's shores,
 And to the southern airy mountains bring
 Their sweet enchantment and their magic powers.

Each nymph her favourite willow takes,
 The earth with fev'rous tremor shakes,
 The stagnant lakes obey their call,
 Streams o'er the grassy pastures fall.

Tweed spreads her waters to the lucid ray,
 Upon the dimpled surf the sun-beams play:

On her green banks the tuneful shepherd lies,
 Charm'd with the music of his reed,
 Amidst the wavings of the Tweed:
 From sky-reflecting streams the river nymphs arise.

CHORUS.

On her green banks the tuneful shepherd lies,
 Charm'd with the music of his reed,
 Amidst the wavings of the Tweed:
 From sky-reflecting streams the river nymphs arise.

The list'ning muses heard the shepherds play,
 Fame with her brazen trump proclaim'd his name,
 And to attend the easy graceful lay,
 Pan from Arcadia to Tweeda came.
 Fond of the change, along the banks he stray'd,
 And sung unmindful of th' Arcadian shade.

AIR—*Tweedside.*

I.

Attend every fanciful swain,
 Whose notes softly flow from the reed,
 With harmony guide the sweet strain,
 To sing of the beauties of Tweed.

II.

Where the music of woods and of streams
 In soothing sweet melody join,
 To enliven your pastoral themes,
 And make human numbers divine.

CHORUS.

Ye warblers from the vocal grove,
 The tender woodland-strain approve,
 While Tweed in smoother cadence glides,
 O'er flow'ry vales in gentle tides;
 And as she rolls her silver waves along,
 Murmurs and sighs to quit the rural song.
 Scotia's great Genius in russet clad,
 From the cool sedgy bank exalts her head,
 In joyful rapture she the change espies,
 Sees living streams descend and groves arise.

I.

As sable clouds at early day,
 Oft dim the shining skies,
 So gloomy thoughts create dismay,
 And lustre leaves her eyes.

II.

“ Ye powers! are Scotia’s ample fields
 “ With so much beauty grac’d,
 “ To have those sweets your bounty yields
 “ By foreign foes defac’d?”

III.

“ O Jove! at whose supreme command
 “ The limpid fountains play,
 “ O’er Caledonia’s northern land
 “ Let restless waters stray.

IV.

“ Since from the void creation rose,
 “ Thou’st made a sacred vow,
 “ That Caledon to foreign foes
 “ Should ne’er be known to bow.”

The mighty Thund’rer on his sapphire throne,
 In mercy’s robes attir’d, heard the sweet voice
 Of female wo—soft as the moving song
 Of Philomela ’midst the evening shades;
 And thus return’d an answer to her pray’rs:

“ Where birks at Nature’s call arise;
 “ Where fragrance hails the vaulted skies;
 “ Where my own oak its umbrage spreads,
 “ Delightful ’midst the woody shades;
 “ Where ivy mould’ring rocks entwines;
 “ Where breezes bend the lofty pines:

“ There shall the laughing Naiads stray,
 “ ’Midst the sweet banks of winding *Tay*.”

From the dark womb of earth *Tay*'s waters spring,
 Ordain'd by Jove's unalterable voice;
 The sounding lyre celestial muses string,
 The choiring songsters in the groves rejoice.

Each fount its crystal fluids pours,
 Which from surrounding mountains flow;
 The river bathes its verdant shores,
 Cool o'er the surf the breezes blow.

Let England's sons extol their gardens fair,
 Scotland may freely boast her gen'rous streams,
 Their soil more fertile and their milder air,
 Her fishes sporting in the solar beams.

Thames, Humber, Severn, all must yield the bay
 To the pure streams of Forth, of Tweed, and *Tay*.

CHORUS.

Thames, Humber, Severn, all must yield the bay
 To the pure streams of Forth, of Tweed, and *Tay*.

O Scotia! when such beauty claims
 A mansion near thy flowing streams,
 Ne'er shall stern Mars, in iron car,
 Drive his proud coursers to the war:
 But fairy forms shall strew around
 Their olives on the peaceful ground;
 And turtles join the warbling throng,
 To usher in the morning song.

Or shout in chorus all the live-long day,
 From the green banks of Forth, of Tweed, and *Tay*.

When gentle Phœbe's friendly light
 In silver radiance clothes the night;

Still music's ever varying strains
 Shall tell the lovers, Cynthia reigns;
 And woo them to her midnight bowers,
 Among the fragrant dew-clad flowers,
 Where ev'ry rock, and hill, and dale,
 With echoes greet the nightingale,
 Whose pleasing, soft, pathetic tongue,
 To kind condolence turns the song;

And oft wins the love-sick swain to stray
 To hear the tender variegated lay,

Thro' the dark woods of Forth, of Tweed, and Tay.

Hail, native streams, and native groves!

Oozy caverns, green alcoves!

Retreats for Cytherea's reign,

With all the Graces in her train.

Hail, Fancy, thou whose ray so bright

Dispels the glimm'ring taper's light!

Come, in an aerial vesture blue,

Ever pleasing, ever new,

In these recesses deign to dwell

With me in yonder moss-clad cell:

Then shall my reed successful tune the lay,

In numbers wildly warbling as they stray

Thro' the glad banks of Forth, Tweed, and Tay.

THE TOWN AND COUNTRY CONTRASTED.

IN AN EPISTLE TO A FRIEND.

FROM noisy bustle, from contention free,
 Far from the busy town I careless loll,
 Not like swain Tityrus, or the bards of old,
 Under a beechen, venerable shade;

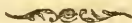
But on a furzy heath where blooming broom
 And thorny whins the spacious plains adorn;
 Here health sits smiling on my youthful brow;
 For ere the sun beams forth his earliest ray,
 And all the east with yellow radiance crowns;
 Ere dame Aurora, from her purple bed,
 'Gins with her kindling blush to paint the sky,
 The soaring lark, morn's cheerful harbinger,
 And linnet joyful flutt'ring from the bush,
 Stretch their small throats in vocal melody,
 To hail the dawn, and drowsy sleep exhale
 From man, frail man! on downy softness stretch'd.

Such pleasing scenes Edina cannot boast;
 For there the slothful slumber seal'd mine eyes,
 'Till nine successive strokes the clock had knell'd.
 There not the lark, but fishwives' noisy screams,
 And inundations plung'd from ten house height,
 With smell more fragrant than the spicy groves
 Of Indus, fraught with all her orient stores,
 Rous'd me from sleep; not sweet refreshing sleep,
 But sleep infested with the burning sting
 Of bug infernal, who the live-long night
 With direst suction sipp'd my liquid gore.
 There gloomy vapours in our zenith reign'd,
 And fill'd with irksome pestilence the air.
 There ling'ring sickness held his feeble court,
 Rejoicing in the havock he had made;
 And death, grim death! with all his ghastly train,
 Watch'd the broke slumbers of Edina's sons.

Hail, rosy health! thou pleasing antidote
 'Gainst troubling cares! all hail, these rural fields,
 Those winding rivulets and verdant shades,
 Where thou the heav'n-born Goddess deign'st to dwell!
 With thee the hind, upon his simple fare,

Lives cheerful, and from Heav'n no more demands.
 But, ah! how vast, how terrible the change
 With him who night by night in sickness pines!
 Him nor his splendid equipage can please,
 Nor all the pageantry the world can boast;
 Nay, not the consolation of his friends
 Can aught avail: his hours are anguish all,
 Nor cease till envious death hath clos'd the scene.

But, Carlos, if we court this maid celestial,
 Whether we thro' meand'ring rivers stray,
 Or 'midst the city's jarring noise remain,
 Let temperance, health's blyth concomitant,
 To our desires and appetites set bounds,
 Else, cloy'd at last, we surfeit every joy;
 Our slack'ned nerves reject their wonted spring;
 We reap the fruits of our unkindly lusts,
 And feebly totter to the silent grave.



ODE TO PITY.

To what sequester'd gloomy shade
 Hath ever gentle Pity stray'd?
 What brook is water'd from her eyes?
 What gales convey her tender sighs?
 Unworthy of her grateful lay,
 She hath despis'd the great, the gay:
 Nay, all the feelings she imparts
 Are far estrang'd from human hearts.

Ah, Pity! whither would'st thou fly
 From human heart, from human eye?
 Are desert woods and twilight groves
 The scenes the sobbing pilgrim loves?

If there thou dwell'st, O Pity, say
 In what lone path you pensive stray?
 I'll know thee by the lily's hue,
 Besprinkl'd with the morning's dew:
 For thou wilt never blush to wear
 The pallid look and falling tear.

In broken cadence from thy tongue,
 Oft have we heard the mournful song;
 Oft have we view'd the loaded bier
 Bedew'd with Pity's softest tear.
 Her sighs and tears were ne'er deny'd
 When innocence and virtue died.
 But in this black and iron age,
 Where Vice and all his demons rage,
 Tho' bells in solemn peals are rung,
 Tho' dirge in mournful verse is sung;
 Soon will the vain parade be o'er,
 Their name, their memory no more:
 Who love and innocence despis'd,
 And ev'ry virtue sacrific'd.
 Here Pity, as a statue dumb,
 Will pay no tribute to the tomb;
 Or wake the memory of those
 Who never felt for others woes.

Thou mistress of the feeling heart!
 Thy pow'rs of sympathy impart.
 If mortals would but fondly prize
 Thy falling tears, thy passing sighs,
 Then should wan poverty no more
 Walk feebly from the rich man's door;
 Humility should vanquish pride,
 And vice be drove from virtue's side:
 Then happiness at length should reign,
 And golden age begin again.

ON THE COLD MONTH OF APRIL 1771.

Oh! who can hold a fire in his hand
 By thinking on the frosty Caucasus;
 Or cloy the hungry edge of appetite
 By bare imagination of a feast;
 Or wallow naked in December's snow,
 By thinking on fantastic summer's heat.

SHAKES. Rich. II.

POETS in vain have hail'd the op'ning Spring,
 In tender accents woo'd the blooming maid,
 In vain have taught the April birds to wing
 Their flight thro' fields in verdant hue array'd.
 The muse in ev'ry season taught to sing
 Amidst the desert snows by fancy's powers,
 Can elevated soar, on placid wing,
 To climes where Spring her kindest influence showers.

April, once famous for the zephyr mild,
 For sweets that early in the garden grow,
 Say, how converted to this cheerless wild,
 Rushing with torrents of dissolving snow?
 Nurs'd by the moisture of a gentle shower,
 Thy foliage oft hath sounded to the breeze;
 Oft did the choristers melodious pour
 Their melting numbers thro' the shady trees.

Fair have I sèen thy morn, in smiles array'd,
 With crimson blush bepaint the eastern sky;
 But now the dawn creeps mournful o'er the glade,
 Shrowded in colours of a sable dye.

So have I seen the fair with laughing eye,
 And visage cheerful as the smiling morn,
 Alternate changing for the heaving sigh,
 Or frowning aspect of contemptuous scorn.

Life! What art thou?—a variegated scene
 Of mingl'd light and shade, of joy and wo;
 A sea where calms and storms promiscuous reign,
 A stream where sweet and bitter jointly flow.

Mute are the plains; the shepherd pipes no more;
 The reed's forsaken, and the tender flock,
 While Echo, listening to the tempest's roar,
 In silence wanders o'er the beetling rock.

Winter, too potent for the solar ray,
 Bestride the blast, ascends his icy throne,
 And views Britannia, subject to his sway,
 Floating emergent on the frigid zone.

Thou savage tyrant of the fretful sky!
 Wilt thou for ever in our zenith reign?
 To Greenland's seas, congeal'd in chillness, fly,
 Where howling monsters tread the bleak domain.

Relent, O Boreas! leave thy frozen cell;
 Resign to Spring her portion of the year;
 Let west winds temp'rate wave the flowing gale,
 And hills, and vales, and woods a vernal aspect wear.

T H E S I M I L E.

AT noontide as Colin and Sylvia lay,
 Within a cool jessamine bow'r,
 A butterfly, wak'd by the heat of the day,
 Was sipping the juice of each flow'r.

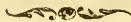
Near the shade of this covert a young shepherd boy
 The gaudy brisk flutterer spies,
 Who held it as pastime to seek and destroy
 Each beautiful insect that flies.

From the lily he hunted this fly to the rose,
 From the rose to the lily again,
 Till weary with tracing its motions, he chose
 To leave the pursuit with disdain.

'Then Colin to Sylvia smilingly said,
 Amyntor has follow'd you long;
 From him, like the butterfly, still have you fled,
 Tho' woo'd by his musical tongue.

Beware in persisting to start from his arms,
 But with his fond wishes comply;
 Come, take my advice; or he's pall'd with your charms,
 Like the youth and the beautiful fly.

Says Sylvia,—Colin, thy simile's just,
 But still to Amyntor I'm coy;
 For I vow she's a simpleton blind that would trust
 A swain, when he courts to destroy.



T H E B U G S.

THOU source of song sublime! thou chiefest Muse!
 Whose sacred fountain of immortal fame
 Bedew'd the flow'rets cull'd for Homer's brow
 When he on Grecian plains the battles sung
 Of frogs and mice: Do thou, thro' Fancy's maze
 Of sportive pastime, lead a lowly Muse
 Her rites to join, while, with a fault'ring voice,
 She sings of reptiles yet in song unknown.

Nor you, ye bards! who oft have struck the lyre,
 And tun'd it to thé movement of the spheres
 In harmony divine, reproach the lays,
 Which tho' they wind not thro' the starry host
 Of bright creation, or on earth delight

To hunt the murm'ring cadence of the floods,
 Thro' scenes where Nature, with a hand profuse,
 Hath lavish strew'd her gems of precious dye;
 Yet, in the small existence of a gnat,
 Or tiny bug, doth she with equal skill,
 If not transcending, stamp her wonders there,
 Only disclos'd to microscopic eye.

Of old the Dryads near Edina's walls
 Their mansions rear'd, and groves unnumber'd rose
 Of branching oak, spread beech, and lofty pine,
 Under whose shade, to shun the noontide blaze,
 Did Pan resort, with all his rural train
 Of shepherds and of nymphs.—The Dryads pleas'd,
 Would hail their sports, and summon Echo's voice
 To send her greetings thro' the waving woods;
 But the rude ax, long brandish'd by the hand
 Of daring innovation, shav'd the lawns;
 Then not a thicket or a copse remain'd
 To sigh in concert with the breeze of eve.

Edina's mansions with lignarian art
 Were pil'd and fronted.—Like an ark she seem'd
 To lie on mountain's top, with shapes replete,
 Clean and unclean, that daily wander o'er
 Her streets, that once were spacious, once were gay.
 'To Jove the Dryads pray'd, nor pray'd in vain,
 For vengeance on her sons.—At midnight drear
 Black show'rs descend, and teeming myriads rise
 Of BUGS abhorrent, who by instinct steal
 Thro' the diseased and corrosive pores
 Of sapless trees, that late in forest stood
 With all the majesty of summer crown'd.

By Jove's command dispers'd, they wander wide
 O'er all the city.—Some their cells prepare
 'Midst the rich trappings and the gay attire

Of state luxuriant, and are fond to press
 The waving canopy's depending folds;
 While others, destin'd to an humbler fate,
 Seek shelter from the dwellings of the poor,
 Plying their nightly suction to the bed
 Of toil'd mechanic, who, with folded arms,
 Enjoys the comforts of a sleep so sound,
 That not th' alarming sting of glutting Bug
 To murd'rous deed can rouse his brawny arm
 Upon the blood-swoln fiend, who basely steals
 Life's genial current from his throbbing veins.

Happy were Grandeur, could she triumph here,
 And banish from her halls each misery,
 Which she must brook in common with the poor,
 Who beg subsistence from her sparing hands;
 Then might the rich, to fell disease unknown,
 Indulge in fond excess, nor ever feel
 The slowly creeping hours of restless night,
 When shook with guilty horrors.—But the wind,
 Whose fretful gusts of anger shake the world,
 Bear more destructive on th' aspiring roofs
 Of dome and palace, than on cottage low,
 That meets Æolus with his gentler breath,
 When safely shelter'd in the peaceful vale.

Is there a being breathes, howe'er so vile,
 Too pitiful for Envy?—She, with venom'd tooth
 And grinning madness, frowns upon the bliss
 Of ev'ry species,—from the human form
 That spurns the earth, and bends his mental eye
 Thro' the profundity of space unknown,
 Down to the crawling Bug's detested race.

Thus the lover pines, that reptile rude
 Should 'midst the lilies of fair Chloe's breast
 Implant the deep carnation, and enjoy

Those sweets which angel modesty hath sear'd
 From eyes profane.—Yet murmur not, ye few
 Who gladly would be Bugs for Chloë's sake!
 For soon, alas! the fluctuating gales
 Of earthly joy invert the happy scene;
 The breath of Spring may, with her balmy pow'r,
 And warmth diffusive, give to Nature's face
 Her brightest colours.—But how short the space!
 Till angry Eurus, from his petrid cave,
 Deform the year, and all these sweets annoy.

Ev'n so befalls it to this creeping race,
 This envy'd commonwealth.—For they a while
 On Chloë's bosom, alabaster fair,
 May steal ambrosial bliss—or may regale
 On the rich viands of luxurious blood,
 Delighted and suffic'd. But mark the end:
 Lo! Whitsuntide appears with gloomy train
 Of growing desolation.—First, Upholsterer rude
 Removes the waving drapery, where, for years,
 A thriving colony of old and young
 Had hid their numbers from the prying day;
 Anon they fall, and gladly would retire
 To safer ambush, but his merc'less foot,
 Ah, cruel pressure! cracks their vital springs,
 And with their deep dy'd scarlet smears the floor.

Sweet pow'rs! has pity in the female breast
 No tender residence—no lov'd abode,
 To urge from murd'rous deed th' avenging hand
 Of angry house-maid?—She'll have blood for blood!
 For lo! the boiling streams from copper tube,
 Hot as her rage, sweep myriads to death.
 Their carcasses are destin'd to the urn
 Of some chaste Naiad, that gives birth to floods,
 Whose fragrant virtues hail Edina, fam'd

For yellow limpid—whose chaste name the *Muss*
Thinks too exalted to retail in song.

Ah me! no longer they at midnight shade,
With baneful sting, shall seek the downy couch
Of slumb'ring mortals.—Nor shall love-sick swain,
When, by the bubbling brook, in fairy dream,
His nymph, but half reluctant to his wish,
Is gently folded in his eager arms,
E'er curse the shaft envenom'd, that disturbs
His long lov'd fancies.—Nor shall hungry bard,
Whose strong imagination, whetted keen,
Conveys him to the feast, be tantaliz'd
With pois'nous tortures, when the cup, brimful
Of purple vintage, gives him greater joy
Than all the heliconian streams that play
And murmur round Parnassus. Now the wretch
Oft doom'd to restless days and sleepless nights,
By bugbear conscience thrall'd, enjoys an hour
Of undisturb'd repose.—The miser too
May brook his golden dreams, nor wake with fear
That thieves or kindred (for no soul he'll trust)
Have broke upon his chest, and strive to steal
The shining idols of his useless hours.

Happy the Bug, whose unambitious views
To gilded pomp ne'er tempt him to aspire;
Safely may he, enwrapt in russet fold
Of cobweb'd-curtain, set at bay the fears
That still attendant are on Bugs of state:
He never knows at morn the busy brush
Of scrubbing chambermaid; his coursing blood
Is ne'er obstructed with obnoxious dose
By OLIPHANT prepar'd.—Too pois'nous drug!
As deadly fatal to this crawling tribe
As ball and powder to the sons of war.





The Weeful fate of those whose cruel Stars
 Have doomed them subject to the languid powers
 Of wat'ry sickness.

Saturday's Expedition

J. Denholm delin.

K. Mackenzie sculp. London.

Engraved for Chapman & Lang's Edition of Fergusson's Poems. 1800.

A SATURDAY'S EXPEDITION.

IN MOCK HEROICS.

NON MIRA, SED VERA, CANAM.

AT that sweet period of revolving time
 When Phœbus lingers not in Thetis lap,
 When twinkling stars their feeble influence shed,
 And scarceiy glimmer thro' th' ethereal vault,
 Till Sol again his near approach proclaims,
 With ray purpureal, and the blushing form
 Of fair Aurora, goddess of the dawn,
 Leading the wing'd coursers to the pole,
 Of Phœbus' car.—'Twas in that season fair,
 When jocund Summer did the meads array
 In Flora's rip'ning bloom—that we prepar'd
 To break the bond of bus'ness, and to roam
 Far from Edina's jarring noise a while.

Fair smil'd the wak'ning morn on our design,
 And we with joy elate our march began
 For Leith's fair port, where oft Edina's sons
 The week conclude, and in carousal quaff
 Port, punch, rum, brandy, and Geneva strong,
 Liquors too nervous for the feeble purse.
 With all convenient speed we there arriv'd,
 Nor had we time to touch at house or hall,
 Till from the boat a hollow thund'ring voice
 Bellow'd vociferous, and our ears assail'd
 With "Ho! Kinghorn, oho! come straight aboard."
 We fail'd not to obey the stern command,
 Utter'd with voice as dreadful as the roar,
 Of Polyphemus, 'midst rebounding rocks,
 When overcome by sage Ulysses' wiles.
 "Hoist up your sails," the angry skipper cries

While fore and aft the busy sailors run,
 And loose th' entangled cordage.—O'er the deep
 Zephyrus blows, and hugs our lofty sails,
 Which, in obedience to the powerful breeze,
 Swell o'er the foaming main, and kiss the wave.

Now o'er the convex surface of the flood
 Precipitate we fly—our foaming prow
 Divides the saline stream—on either side
 Ridges of yesty surge dilate apace;
 But from the poop the waters gently flow,
 And undulation for the time decays,
 In eddies smoothly floating o'er the main.

Here let the muse in doleful numbers sing
 The woful fate of those whose cruel stars
 Have doom'd them subject to the languid powers
 Of wat'ry sickness.—Tho' with stomach full
 Of juicy beef, of mutton in its prime,
 Or all the dainties luxury can boast,
 They brave the elements,—yet the rocking bark,
 Truly regardless of their precious food,
 Converts their visage to the ghastly pale,
 And makes the sea partaker of the sweets
 On which they sumptuous far'd, and this the cause,
 Why those of Scotia's sons whose wealthy store
 Hath blest them with a splendid coach and six,
 Rather incline to linger on the way,
 And cross the river Forth by Stirling bridge,
 Than be subjected to the ocean's swell,
 To dang'rous ferries, and to sickness dire.

And now at equal distance shews the land;
 Gladly the tars the joyful task pursue
 Of gathering in the freight—Debates arise
 From counterfeited halfpence—In the hold
 The scamen scrutinize and eager peep

Thro' ev'ry corner where their watchful eye
 Suspect a lurking place, or dark retreat,
 To hide the timid corpse of some poor soul,
 Whose scanty purse can scarce one groat afford.
 At length we chearful land on Fife shore,
 Where sickness vanishes, and all the ills
 Attendant on the passage of Kinghorn.
 Our pallid cheeks resume their rosy hue,
 And empty stomachs keenly crave supply—
 With eager step we reach'd the friendly inn,
 Nor did we think of beating our retreat,
 'Till ev'ry gnawing appetite was quell'd.

Eastward along the Fife coast we stray;
 And here th' unwearied eye may fondly gaze
 O'er all the tufted groves and pointed spires
 With which the pleasant banks of Forth are crown'd.
 Sweet navigable stream! where Commerce reigns,
 Where Peace and jocund Plenty smile serene:
 On thy green banks sits Liberty enthron'd,
 But not that shadow which the English youth
 So eagerly pursue; but freedom bought,
 When Caledonia's triumphant sword
 Taught the proud sons of Anglia to bemoan,
 'Their fate at Bannockburn, where thousands came
 Never to tread their native soil again.

Far in a hollow den, where Nature's hand
 Had careless strew'd the rocks—a dreadful cave,
 Whose concave cieling echo'd to the floods
 Their hollow murmurs on the trembling shore,
 Demanded our approach.—The yawning porch
 Its massy sides disclos'd, and o'er the top
 The ivy tendrils twin'd th' uncultur'd fern:
 Fearful we pry into the dreary vault,
 Hoary with age, and breathing noxious damps:

Here busy owls may unmolested dwell
 In solitary gloom—for few there are
 Whose inclination leads them to review
 A cell where putrid smells infectious reign*.

Then turning westward, we our course pursue
 Along the verge of Forth's briny flood,
 Till we o'ertake the gradual rising dale
 Where fair Burntisland rears her rev'rend dome;
 And here the vulgar sign-post, painted o'er
 With imitations vile of man and horse,
 Of small beer frothing o'er th' unshapely jug
 With courteous invitation, spoke us fair
 To enter in, and taste what precious drops
 Were there reserv'd to moisten strangers throats,
 Too often parch'd upon the tedious way.

After regaling here with sober can,
 Our limbs we plied, and nimbly measur'd o'er
 The hills, the vales, and the extensive plains,
 Which form the distance from Burntisland's port
 To Inverkeithing. Westward still we went,
 Till in the ferry-boat we loll'd at ease;
 Nor did we long on Neptune's empire float,
 For scarce ten posting minutes were elaps'd
 Till we again on *Terra Firma* stood,
 And to M'LAREN's march'd where roasted lamb,
 With cooling lettuce, crown'd our social board.
 Here, too, the chearing glass, chief foe to cares!
 Went briskly round; and many a virgin fair
 Receiv'd our homage in a bumper full.

Thus having sacrific'd a jocund hour,
 To smiling mirth, we quit the happy scene,
 And move progressive to Edina's walls.

* A large cave at a small distance from Kinghorn, supposed about a century ago, to have been the receptacle of thieves.

Now still returning eve creep'd gradual on,
 And the bright sun, as weary of the sky,
 Beam'd forth a languid occidental ray;
 Whose ruby tinctur'd radiance faintly gleam'd
 Upon the airy cliffs and distant spires,
 That float on the horizon's utmost verge.
 So we with festive joints and ling'ring pace,
 Mov'd slowly on, and did not reach the town
 Till Phœbus had unyok'd his prancing steeds.

Ye sons of Caledonia! who delight,
 With all the pomp and pageantry of state,
 To roll along in gilded affluence,
 For one poor moment wean your thoughts from these.
 And list this humble strain.—If you, like us,
 Could brave the angry waters, be uprous'd
 By the first salutation to the morn
 Paid by the watchful cock; or be compell'd
 On foot to wander o'er the lonely plain
 For twenty tedious miles; then should the gout
 With all his racking pangs forsake your frame:
 For he delights not to traverse the field,
 Or rugged steed, but prides him to recline
 On the luxuriance of a velvet fold,
 Where indolence on purple sofa lolls.



THE CANNONGATE PLAYHOUSE IN RUINS:

A BURLESQUE POEM.

YE few whose feeling hearts are ne'er estrang'd
 From soft emotions! Ye who often wear
 The eye of Pity, and oft vent her sighs,
 When sad Melpomene, in wo-fraught strains,
 Gains entrance to the breast; or often smile
 When brisk Thalia gaily trips along

Scenes of enliv'ning mirth, attend my song!
 And Fancy, thou! whose ever-flaming light
 Can penetrate into the dark abyss
 Of chaos and of hell: O! with thy blazing torch
 'The wasteful scene illumine, that the Muse
 With daring pinions, may her flight pursue,
 Nor with timidity be known to soar
 O'er the *theatric world* to chaos chang'd.
 Can I contemplate on those dreary scenes
 Of mould'ring desolation, and forbid
 'The voice elegiac, and the falling tear!
 No more from box to box the basket pil'd
 With oranges as radiant as the spheres,
 Shall with their luscious virtues charm the sense
 Of taste and smell. No more the gaudy beau,
 With handkerchief in lavender well drench'd,
 Or bergamot, or rose of waters pure,
 With flavoriferous sweets shall chace away
 The pestilential fumes of vulgar cits,
 Who, in impatience for the curtain's rise,
 Amus'd the ling'ring moments, and apply'd
 'Thirst-quenching porter to their parched lips.

Alas, how sadly alter'd is the scene!

For lo! those sacred walls, that late were brush'd
 By rustling silks and waving capuchines,
 Are now become the sport of wrinkled Time!
 Those walls that late have echo'd to the voice
 Of stern King Richard, to the seat transform'd
 Of crawling spiders and detested moths,
 Who in the lonely crevices reside;
 Or gender in the beams, that have upheld
 Gods, demi-gods, and all the joyous crew
 Of thund'ers in the galleries above.

O Shakesp'ere! where are all thy tinsell'd kings,

Thy fawning courtiers, and thy waggish clowns?
 Where all thy faries, spirits, witches, fiends,
 That here have gambol'd in nocturnal sport,
 Round the lone oak, or sunk in fear away
 From the shrill summons of the cock at morn,
 Where now the temples, palaces, and tow'rs?
 Where now the groves that ever-verdant smil'd?
 Where now the streams that never ceas'd to flow?
 Where now the clouds, the rains, the hails, the winds,
 The thunders, lightnings, and the tempests strong?

Here shepherds, lolling in their woven bow'rs,
 In dull *recitativo* often sung
 Their loves, accompanied with clangor strong
 From horns, from trumpets, clarinets, bassoons;
 From violinos sharp, or droning bass,
 Or the brisk tinkling of a harpsichord.

Such is thy pow'r, O Music! such thy fame
 That it has fabled been, how foreign song,
 Soft issuing from Tenducci's slender throat,
 Has drawn a plaudit from the gods enthron'd
 Round the empyreum of Jove himself,
 High seated on Olympus' airy top.
 Nay, that his fev'rous voice was known to soothe
 The shrill ton'd prating of the females' tongues,
 Who, in obedience to the lifeless song,
 All prostrate fell, all fainting dy'd away
 In silent ecstasies of passing joy.

Ye who oft wander by the silver light
 Of sister Luna,—or to church-yards gloom,
 Or cypress shades, if Chance should guide your steps
 To this sad mansion, think not that you tread
 Unconsecrated paths; for on this ground
 Have holy streams been pour'd, and flow'rets strew'd;
 While many a kingly diadem, I ween,

Lies useless here entomb'd, with heaps of coin
 Stamp'd in *theatric mint*: offenceless gold!
 That carried not persuasion in its hue,
 To tutor mankind in their evil ways.
 After a lengthen'd series of years,
 When the unhallow'd spade shall discompose
 This mass of earth, then relics shall be found,
 Which, or for gems of worth, or Roman coins,
 Well may obtrude on antiquary's eye.
 Ye spouting blades! regard this ruin'd fane,
 And nightly come within those naked walls,
 To shed the tragic tear. Full many a drop
 Of precious inspiration have you suck'd
 From its dramatic sources. O! look here
 Upon this roofless and forsaken pile,
 And stalk in pensive sorrow o'er the ground
 Where you've beheld so many noble scenes.
 Thus, when the mariner to foreign clime
 His bark conveys, where odoriferous gales,
 And orange groves, and love-inspiring wine,
 Have oft repaid his toil; if earthquake dire,
 With hollow groanings and convulsive pangs,
 The ground hath rent, and all those beauties foil'd,
 Will he refrain to shed the grateful drop,
 A tribute justly due (tho' seldom paid)
 To the blest memory of happier times?



F A S H I O N.

Bred up where discipline most rare is,
 In Military Garden *Paris*. HUDIBRAS.

O NATURE, parent goddess! at thy shrine,
 Prone to the earth, the Muse, in humble song,
 Thy aid implores: Nor will she wing her flight,

Till thou, bright form! in thy effulgence pure
 Deign'st to look down upon her lowly state,
 And shed thy pow'rful influence benign.

Come then, regardless of vain Fashion's fools,
 Of all those vile enormities of shape
 That crowd the world, and with thee bring
 Wisdom in sober contemplation clad,
 To lash those bold usurpers from the stage.

On that bless'd spot where the Parisian dome
 To fools the stealing hand of Time displays,
 FASHION her empire holds, a goddess great!
 View her amidst the *Millenarian* train
 On a resplendent throne, exalted high,
 Strangely diversified with gewgaw forms.
 Her busy hand glides pleasureably o'er
 The darling novelties, the trinkets rare
 That greet the sight of the admiring dames,
 Those dear-bought treasures o'er their native isle
 Contagious spread, infect the wholesome air
 That cherish'd vigour in Britannia's sons.

Near this proud seat of Fashion's antic form
 A sphere revolves, on whose bright orb behold
 The circulating mode of changeful dress,
 Which, like the image of the sun himself,
 Glories in coursing thro' the diverse signs
 Which blazon in the zodiac of heav'n.
 Around her throne coquets and *petits beaux*
 Unnumber'd shine, and with each other vie
 In nameless ornaments and gaudy plumes.
 O worthy emulation! to excel
 In trifles such as these: how truly great!
 Unworthy of the pcevish blubb'ring boy,
 Crush'd in his childhood by the fondling nurse,
 Who, for some fav'rite bubble, frets and pines.

Amongst the proud attendants of this shrine,
 The wealthy, young, and gay Clarinda draws
 From poorer objects, the astonish'd eye:
 Her looks, her dress, and her affected mien
 Doom her enthusiast keen in Fashion's train:
 White as the cover'd Alps, or wintry face
 Of snowy Lapland, her *toupee* uprear'd,
 Exhibits to the view a cumb'rous mass
 Of curls high nodding o'er her polish'd brow;
 From which redundant flows the Brussels lace
 With pendant ribbons too of various dye,
 Where all the colours in th' ethereal bow
 Unite, and blend, and tantalize the sight.

Nature! to thee alone, not Fashion's pomp
 Does Beauty owe her all-commanding eye.
 From the green bosom of the watry main,
 Array'd by thee, majestic Venus rose,
 With waving ringlets carelessly diffus'd
 Floating luxurious o'er the restless surge.
 What Rubens, then, with his enliv'ning hand,
 Could paint the bright vermilion of her cheek,
 Pure as the roseate portal of the east,
 That opens to receive the chearing ray
 Of Phœbus beaming from the orient sky?
 For sterling Beauty needs no faint essays,
 Or colourings of art, to gild her more:
 She is all perfect. And, if Beauty fail,
 Where are those ornaments, those rich attires
 Which can reflect a lustre on that face,
 Where she with light innate disdains to shine?

Britons, beware of Fashion's luring wiles:
 On either hand, chief guardians of her pow'r,
 And sole dictators of her fickle voice,
 Folly and dull Effeminacy reign;

Whose blackest magic and unhallow'd spells
The Roman ardour check'd; their strength decay'd,
And all their glory scatter'd to the winds.

Tremble, O Albion! for the voice of Fate
Seems ready to decree thy after-fall.
By pride, by luxury, what fated ills
Unheeded have approached thy mortal frame!
How many foreign weeds their heads have rear'd
In thy fair garden? Hasten, ere their strength
And baneful vegetation taint the soil,
To root out rank disease, which soon must spread,
If no bless'd antidote will purge away
Fashion's proud minions from our sea-girt isle.



A BURLESQUE ELEGY

On the Amputation of a STUDENT'S HAIR, before his ORDERS.

O SAD catastrophe! O event dire!
How shall the loss, the heavy loss be borne?
Or how the Muse attune the plaintive lyre,
To sing of Strephon with his ringlets shorn?
Say ye, who can divine the mighty cause,
From whence this modern circumcision springs?
Why such oppressive and such rigid laws
Are still attendant on religious things?
Alas! poor Strephon, to the stern decree
Which prunes your tresses, are you doom'd to yield?
Soon shall your *caput*, like the blasted tree,
Diffuse its faded honours o'er the field.
Now let the solemn sounds of mourning swell,
And wake sad echoes to prolong the lay;
For hark! methinks I hear the tragic knell;
This hour bespeaks the barber on his way.

O razor! yet thy poignant edge suspend;
 O yet indulge me with a short delay;
 Till I once more pourtray my youthful friend,
 Ere his proud locks are scatter'd on the clay.

Ere the huge wig, in formal curls array'd,
 With pulvile pregnant, shall o'ershade his face;
 Or, like the wild umbrella, lend its aid,
 To banish lustre from the sacred place.

Mourn, O ye zephyrs! for, alas! no more
 His waving ringlets shall your call obey!
 For, ah! the stubborn wig must now be wore,
 Since Strephon's locks are scatter'd on the clay.

Amanda, too, in bitter anguish sighs,
 And grieves the metamorphosis to see;
 Mourn not, Amanda, for the hair that lies
 Dead on the ground shall be reviv'd for thee.

Some skilful artist of a French *friseur*,
 With graceful ringlets shall thy temples bind,
 And cull the precious relics from the floor,
 Which yet may flutter in the wanton wind.

 V E R S E S

Written at the HERMITAGE of BRAID, near EDINBURGH.

WOULD you relish a rural retreat,
 Or the pleasure the groves can inspire,
 The city's allurements forget,
 To this spot of enchantment retire.

Where a valley, and crystalline brook,
 Whose current glides sweetly along,
 Give nature a fanciful look,
 The beautiful woodlands among.

Behold the umbrageous trees

A covert of verdure have spread,
Where shepherds may loll at their ease,
And pipe to the musical shade:

For, lo! thro' each op'ning is heard,
In concert with waters below,
The voice of a musical bird,
Whose numbers do gracefully flow.

The bushes and arbours so green,
The tendrils of spray interwove,
With foliage shelter the scene,
And form a retirement for love.

Here Venus transported may rove
From pleasure to pleasure unseen,
Nor wish for the Cyprian grove
Her youthful Adonis to screen.

Oft let me contemplative dwell
On a scene where such beauties appear;
I could live in a cot or a cell,
And never think solitude near.

A T A L E.

THOSE rigid pedagogues and fools,
Who walk by self-invented rules,
Do often try with empty head,
The emptier mortals to mislead,
And fain would urge, that none but they
Could rightly teach the A, B, C,
On which they've got an endless comment,
To trifling minds of mighty moment,
Throwing forth barriers in the way
Of those who genius display,

As often, ah! too often teaze
 Them out of patience, and of fees,
 Before they're able to explode
 Obstructions thrown on Learning's road.
 May mankind all employ their tools
 To banish pedantry from schools!
 And may each pedagogue avail,
 By list'ning to the after tale!

Wise Mr. BIRCH had long intended
 The alphabet should be amended,
 And taught that H a breathing was,
Ergo he saw no proper cause,
 Why such a letter should exist:
 Thus in a breath was he dismiss'd,
 With, "O beware, beware, O youth!
 "Take not the villain in your mouth."

One day this alphabetic sinner
 Was eager to devour his dinner,
 When to appease the craving glutton,
 His boy Tom produc'd the mutton.
 Was such disaster ever told?
 Alas! the meat was deadly cold!
 Here take and h—eat it, says the master;
 Quoth Tom, that shall be done, and fast, 'Sir:
 And few there are who will dispute it;
 And he went instantly about it;
 For Birch had scorn'd the H to say,
 And blew him with a puff away.

The bell was rung with dread alarm;
 "Bring me the mutton, is it warm?"
Sir, you desir'd, and I have eat it;
 "You lie, my orders were to *heat* it."
 Quoth Tom, I'll readily allow
 That H is but a breathing now.

THE PEASANT, THE HEN, AND YOUNG DUCKS:

A FABLE.

A HEN, of all the dung-hill crew
 'The fairest, stateliest to view,
 Of laying tir'd she fondly begs
 Her keeper's leave to hatch her eggs:
 He, dunn'd with the incessant cry,
 Was forc'd for peace sake to comply;
 And in a month the downy brood
 Came chirping round the hen for food,
 Who view'd them with parental eyes
 Of pleasing fondness and surprise,
 And was not at a loss to trace
 Her likeness growing in their face;
 'Tho' the broad *bills* could well declare
 That they another's offspring were;
 So strong will prejudices blind,
 And lead astray the easy mind.

'To the green margin of the brook
 'The hen her fancied children took;
 Each young one shakes his unfledg'd wings,
 And to the flood by instinct springs;
 With willing strokes they gladly swim,
 Or dive into the glassy stream,
 While the fond mother vents her grief,
 And prays the peasant's kind relief.
 The peasant heard the bitter cries,
 And thus in terms of rage replies:
 " You fool! give o'er your useless moan,
 " Nor mourn misfortunes not your own;
 " But learn in wisdom to forsake
 " 'The offspring of the duck and drake."

To whom the hen, with angry crest
 And scornful look, herself address:
 " If reason were my constant guide
 " (Of man the ornament and pride,)
 " 'Then should I boast a cruel heart,
 " And foreign feeling all depart;
 " But since poor I, by instinct blind,
 " Can boast no feelings so refin'd,
 " 'Tis hop'd your reason will excuse,
 " 'Tho' I your counsel sage refuse,
 " And from the perils of the flood,
 " Attempt to save another's brood."

MORAL.

When Pity, gen'rous nymph! possest,
 And mov'd at will the human breast,
 No tongue its distant sufferings told,
 But she assisted, she condol'd,
 And willing bore her tender part
 In all the feelings of the heart;
 But now from her our hearts decoy'd,
 To sense of other woes destroy'd,
 Act only from a selfish view,
 Nor give the aid to Pity due.



TO THE MEMORY OF JOHN CUNNINGHAM THE POET.

Sing his praises that doth keep
 Our flocks from harm
 PAN, the father of our sheep;
 And arm in arm
 Tread we softly in a round,
 While the hollow neighb'ring ground
 Fills the music with her sound.

BEAUMONT and FLETCHER.

YE mournful meanders and groves,
 Delight of the Muse and her song!

Ye grottos and dropping alcoves,
 No strangers to Corydon's tongue!

Let each Sylvan and Dryad declare
 His themes and his music how dear;
 Their plaints and their dirges prepare,
 Attendant on Corydon's bier.

The echo that join'd in the lay,
 So amorous, sprightly, and free,
 Shall send forth the sounds of dismay,
 And sigh with sad pity for thee.

Wild wander his flocks with the breeze;
 His reed can no longer controul;
 His numbers no longer can please,
 Or send kind relief to the soul.

But long may they wander and bleat,
 To hills tell the tale of their wo;
 The woodlands the tale shall repeat,
 And the waters shall mournfully flow.

For these were the haunts of his love,
 The sacred retreats of his ease,
 Where favourite Fancy would rove,
 As wanton, as light as the breeze.

Her zone will discolour'd appear,
 With fanciful ringlets unbound,
 A face pale and languid she'll wear,
 A heart fraught with sorrow profound.

The reed of each shepherd will mourn,
 The shades of Parnassus decay;
 The Muses will dry their sad urn,
 Since 'rest of young Corydon's lay.

To him ev'ry passion was known
 That throb'd in the breast with desire;
 Each gentle affection was shewn
 In the soft sighing songs of his lyre.
 Like the caroling thrush on the spray
 In music soft warbling and wild,
 'To love was devoted each lay,
 In accents pathetic and mild.
 Let beauty and virtue revere,
 And the songs of the shepherd approve,
 Who felt, who lamented the snare,
 When repining at pityless love.
 The summer but languidly gleams,
 Pomona no comfort can bring,
 Nor vallies, nor grottos, nor streams,
 Nor the May-born flow'rets of spring.
 They've fled all with Corydon's Muse,
 For his brows to form chaplets of wo;
 Whose reed oft awaken'd their boughs,
 As the whispering breezes that blow.
 To many a fanciful spring
 His lyre was melodiously strung;
 While fairies and fawns in a ring
 Have applauded the swain as he sung.
 To the cheerful he usher'd his smiles,
 To the woful his sigh and his tear;
 A condoler with want and her toils,
 When the voice of oppression was near.
 Tho' titles and wealth were his due,
 Tho' Fortune denied the reward;
 Yet truth and sincerity knew
 What the goddess would never regard.

Avails aught the generous heart,
 Which Nature to goodness design'd,
 If Fortune denies to impart
 Her kindly relief to the mind?

'Twas but faint the relief to dismay,
 The cells of the wretched among;
 Tho' sympathy sung in the lay,
 Tho' melody fell from his tongue.

Let the favour'd of Fortune attend
 To the ails of the wretched and poor:
 Tho' Corydon's lays can befriend
 'Tis riches alone that can cure.

But they to Compassion are dumb,
 To Pity their voices unknown;
 Near Sorrow they never can come,
 Till Misfortune has mark'd them her own.

Now the shades of the evening depend;
 Each warbler is lull'd on the spray;
 The cypress doth ruefully bend
 Where the cold corpse of Corydon stay.

Adieu then the songs of the swain!
 Let Peace still attend on his shade;
 And his pipe that is dumb to his strain,
 In the grave be with Corydon laid.



THE DELIGHTS OF VIRTUE.

RETURNING morn, in orient blush array'd,
 With gentle radiance hail'd the sky serene;
 No rustling breezes wav'd the verdant shade,
 Nor swelling surge disturb'd the azure main.

These moments, Meditation, sure are thine;
 These are thy halcyon joys you wish to find,
 When Nature's peaceful elements combine
 To suit the calm composure of the mind.

The Muse, exalted by thy sacred pow'r,
 To the green mountain's air-born summit flew,
 Charm'd with the thoughtful stillness of an hour,
 That usher'd beaming Fancy to her view.

Fresh from old Neptune's fluid mansion sprung
 The sun, reviver of each drooping flow'r;
 At his approach, the lark with matin song,
 In notes of gratitude confess'd his pow'r.

So shines fair Virtue, shedding light divine,
 On those who wish'd to profit by her ways;
 Who ne'er at parting with their vice repine,
 To taste the comforts of her blissful rays.

She with fresh hopes each sorrow can beguile,
 Can dissipate Adversity's stern gloom,
 Make meagre Poverty contented smile,
 And the sad wretch forget his hapless doom.

Sweeter than shady groves in summer's pride,
 Than flow'ry dales or grassy meads is she;
 Delightful as the honey'd streams that glide
 From the rich labours of the busy bee.

Her paths and alleys are for ever green;
 There innocence, in snowy robes array'd,
 With smiles of pure content is hail'd the queen
 And happy mistress of the sacred shade.

O let not transient gleams of earthly joy
 From Virtue lure your lab'ring steps aside;
 Nor instant grandeur future hopes annoy
 With thoughts that spring from Insolence and Pride.

Soon will the winged moments speed away,
 When you'll no more the plumes of honour wear;
 Grandeur must shudder at the sad decay,
 And pride look humble when he ponders there.
 Depriv'd of Virtue, where is beauty's pow'r?
 Her dimpl'd smiles, her roses charm no more;
 So much can guilt the loveliest form deflow'r,
 We lothe that beauty which we lov'd before.
 How fair are Virtue's buds where'er they blow,
 Or in the desert wild or garden gay!
 Her flow'rs how sacred wheresoe'er they show,
 Unknown to the black canker of decay!

A TAVERN ELEGY.

FLED are the moments of delusive Mirth,
 The fancied pleasure! paradise divine!
 Hush'd are the clamours that derive their birth
 From gen'rous floods of soul-reviving wine.
 Still night and silence now succeed the noise;
 The ebbing tides of passion rage no more;
 But all is peaceful as the ocean's voice
 When breezeless waters kiss the silent shore.
 Here stood the juice whose care-controuling pow'rs
 Could ev'ry human misery subdue,
 And wake to sportive joy the lazy hours,
 That to the languid senses hateful grew.
 Attracted by the magic of the bowl,
 Around the swelling brim in full array,
 The glasses circl'd, as the planets roll,
 And hail with borrow'd light the god of day.

Here Music, the delight of moments gay,
 Bade the unguarded tongues their motions cease,
 And with a mirthful, a melodious lay,
 Aw'd the fell voice of Discord into peace.

These are the joys that Virtue must approve,
 While Reason shines with majesty divine,
 Ere our ideas in disorder move,
 And sad excess against the soul combine.

What evils have not frenzy'd mortals done
 By wine, that *ignis fatuus* of the mind!
 How many by its force to vice are won,
 Since first ordain'd to tantalize mankind!

By Bacchus' pow'r, ye sons of riot! say,
 How many watchful centinels have bled!
 How many travellers have lost their way,
 By lamps unguided thro' the ev'ning shade!

O spare those friendly twinklers of the night!
 Let no rude cane their hallow'd orbs assail!
 For cowardice alone condemns the light
 That shews her countenance aghast and pale.

Now the short taper warns me to depart
 Ere Darkness shall assume his dreary sway;
 Ere Solitude fall heavy on my heart,
 That lingers for the far approach of day.

Who would not vindicate the happy doom
 To be for ever number'd with the dead,
 Rather than bear the miserable gloom,
 When all his comfort, all his friends are fled?

Bear me, ye gods! where I may calmly rest
 From all the follies of the night secure;
 The balmy blessings of Repose to taste,
 Nor hear the tongue of Outrage at my door.

GOOD EATING.

HEAR, O ye host of Epicurus! hear!
 Each portly form, whose overhanging paunch
 Can well denote the all-transcendent joy
 That springs unbounded from fruition full
 Of rich repast; to you I consecrate
 The song advent'rous; happy if the Muse
 Can cook the numbers to your palates keen,
 Or send but half the relish with her song,
 That smoking sirloins to your souls convey.

Hence now, ye starv'lings wan! whose empty wombs
 Oft echo to the hollow-murm'ring tones
 Of Hunger fell.—Avaunt, ye base born hinds!
 Whose fates unkind ne'er destin'd you to gorge
 The banquet rare, or wage a pleasing war
 With the delicious morsels of the earth.
 To you I sing not: for, alas! what pain,
 What tantalizing tortures would ensue,
 To aid the force of Famine's sharpest tooth,
 Were I to breathe my accents in your ear!

Hail, ROAST BEEF! monarch of the festive throng,
 To hunger's bane the strongest antidote;
 Come, and with all thy rage-appeasing sweets
 Our appetites allay! For, or attended
 By root Hibernian, or plumb-pudding rare,
 Still thou art welcome to the social board.
 Say, can the spicy gales from Orient blown,
 Or zephyr's wing, that from the orange groves
 Brushes the breeze, with rich perfumes replete,
 More aromatic or reviving smell
 To nostrils bring? Or can the glassy streams
 Of Pactolus, that o'er its golden sands
 Delightful glide, thy luscious drops outvie,

That from thy sides embrown'd unnumber'd fall?
 Behold, at thy approach, what smiles serene
 Beam from the ravish'd guests!—Still are their tongues,
 While they with whetted instruments prepare
 For deep incision.—Now the abscess bleeds,
 And the devouring band, with stomachs keen,
 And glutting rage, thy béauteous form destrôy,
 Leave you a marrowless skeleton and bare,
 A prey to dunghills, or vexatious sport
 Of torrent rushing from *defilement's urns*,
 That o'er the city's flinty pavement hurls.

So fares it with the man, whose pow'rful pelf
 Once could command respect. Caress'd by all,
 His bounties were as lavish as the hand
 Of yellow Ceres, till his stores decay'd,
 And then (O dismal tale!) those precious drops
 Of flatt'ry that bedew'd his spring of fortune,
 Leave the sad winter of his state so fall'n,
 Nor nurse the thorn from which they ne'er can hope
 Again to pluck the odour dropping rose!
 For thee, *Roast Beef!* in variegated shapes,
 Have mortals toil'd.—The sailor sternly braves
 The strength of Boreas, and exulting stands
 Upon the sea-wash'd deck—with hopes inspir'd
 Of yet indulging in thy wish'd-for sweets,
 He smiles amidst the dangers that surround him;
 Cheerful he steers to cold forbidden climes,
 Or to the torrid zone explores his way.

Be kind, ye Pow'rs! and still propitious send
 This paragon of feeding to our halls.
 With this regal'd, who would vain-glorious wish
 For tow'ring pyramids superbly crown'd,
 With jellies, syllabubs, or ice-creams rare?
 These can amuse the eye, and may bestow

A short-liv'd pleasure to a palate strange;
 But, for a moment's pleasure, who would vend
 A life-time that would else be spent in joy
 For hateful lothings and for gouty rheums,
 Ever preceded by indulg'd excess!

Blest be those walls where HOSPITALITY
 And Welcome reign at large! There may you oft
 Of social cheer partake, and love and joy,
 Pleasures that to the human mind convey
 Ideal pictures of the bliss supreme:
 But near the gate where parsimony dwells,
 Where ceremony cool, and brow austere,
 Confront the guests, ne'er let thy foot approach!
 For, void of kind benev'lence, heavenly virtue!
 What is life's garden but a devious wild,
 Thro' which the traveller must pass forlorn,
 Unguided by the aid of Friendship's ray?
 Rather, if Poverty hold converse with thee,
 To the lone garret's lofty bield ascend,
 Or dive to some sad cell; there have recourse
 To meagre offals, where, tho' small thy fare,
 Freedom shall wing thee to a purer joy
 Than banquets with superfluous dainties crown'd,
 Mix'd with reserve and coolness, can afford.

But, if your better fortunes have prepar'd
 Your purse with ducats, and with health thy frame,
 Assemble, friends! and to the tavern straight,
 Where the officious waiter, bending low,
 Is passive to a fault. Then, nor the Signior Grand,
 Or Russia's Empress, signaliz'd for war,
 Can govern with more arbitrary sway.

Ye who for health, for exercise, for air,
 Oft saunter from Edina's smoke-capt spires,
 And, by the grassy hill or dimpl'd brook,

An appetite revive, should oft-times stray
 O'er Arhur's Seat's green pastures, to the town
 For sheep-heads and bone-bridges fam'd of yore,
 That in our country's annals stands yclept
 Fair Duddingstonia, where you may be blest
 With simple fare and vegetable sweets,
 Freed from the clamours of the busy world.

Or, if for recreation you should stray
 To Leithian shore, and breathe the keener air
 Wafted from Neptune's empire of the main;
 If appetite invite, and cash prevail,
 Ply not your joints upon the homeward track,
 Till LAWSON, chiefest of the Scottish hosts!
 To nimble-footed waiters give command
 The cloth to lay.—Instinctively they come,
 And lo! the table wrapt in cloudy steams,
 Groans with the weight of the transporting fare
 That breathes frankincense on the guests around.

Now, while stern Winter holds his frigid sway,
 And to a period spins the closing year;
 While festivals abound, and sportive hours
 Kill the remembrance of our weaning time,
 Let not Intemperance, destructive fiend!
 Gain entrance to your halls.—Despoil'd by him,
 Shall cloyed appetite, forerunner sad
 Of rank disease, invet'rate clasp your frame.
 Contentment shall no more be known to spread
 Her cherub wings round thy once happy dwelling,
 But misery of thought, and racking pain,
 Shall plunge you headlong to the dark abyss.



YE maidens modest! on whose sullen brows
 Hath weaning Chastity her wrinkles cull'd,
 Who constant labour o'er consumptive oil,
 At midnight knell, to wash sleep's nightly balm
 From closing eye-lids, with the grateful drops
 Of TEA's blest juices; list th' obsequious lays
 That come not with Parnassian honours crown'd,
 To dwell in murmurs o'er your sleepy sense,
 But fresh from Orient blown to chace far off
 Your lethargy, that dormant needles rous'd
 May pierce the waving mantua's silken folds:
 For many a dame in chamber sadly pent,
 Hath this reviving limpid call'd to life;
 And well-it did, to mitigate the frowns
 Of anger reddening on Lucinda's brow
 With flash malignant, that had harbour'd there,
 If she at masquerade, or play, or ball,
 Appear'd not in her newest, best attire.
 But Venus, goddess of th' eternal smile,
 Knowing that stormy brows but ill become
 Fair patterns of her beauty, hath ordain'd
 Celestial Tea!—A fountain that can cure
 The ills of passion, and can free the fair
 From frowns and sighs, by Disappointment earn'd.

To her, ye fair, in adoration bow!

Whether at blushing morn, or dewy eve;
 Her smoking cordials greet your fragrant board;
 With Suchong, Congo, or coarse Bohea crown'd.
 At midnight skies, ye mantua-makers, hail
 The sacred offering!—For the haughty belles
 No longer upbraid your ling'ring hands
 With trains upborn aloft by dusky gales

That sweep the ball-room—swift they glide along,
 And, with their sailing streamers, catch the eye
 Of some Adonis, mark'd to love a prey.

Whose bosom ne'er had panted with a sigh,
 But for the silken drap'ries that inclose
 Graces which nature has by Art conceal'd.

Mark well the fair! observe their modest eye,
 With all the innocence of beauty blest.

Could Slander o'er that tongue its pow'r retain
 Whose breath is music? Ah, fallacious thought!

The surface is Ambrosia's mingl'd sweets;

But all below is death. At tea-board met,

Attend their prattling tongues—they scoff—they rail

Unbounded; but their darts are chiefly aim'd

At some gay fair, whose beauties far eclipse

Her dim beholders—who, with haggard eyes,

Would blight those charms where raptures long have
 In ecstasy, delighted and suffic'd. [dwelt

- In vain hath Beauty, with her varied robe,

Bestow'd her glowing blushes o'er her cheeks,

And call'd attendant Graces to her aid,

To blend the scarlet and the lily fair.

In vain did Venus in her fav'rite mould

Adapt the slender form to Cupid's choice—

When slander comes, her blasts too fatal prove;

Pale are those cheeks where youth and beauty glow'd,

Where smiles, where freshness, and where roses grew:

Ghastly and wan their Gorgon picture comes,

With ev'ry Fury grinning from the looks

Of frightful monster—Envy's hissing tongue,

With deepest vengeance wounds, and ev'ry wound

With deeper canker, deeper poison teems.

O gold! thy luring lustre first prevail'd

On man to tempt the fretful winds and waves,

And hunt new fancies. Still thy glaring form
 Bids commerce thrive, and o'er the Indian waves,
 O'er-stemming danger, draw the lab'ring keel
 From China's coast to Britain's colder clime,
 Fraught with the fruits and herbage of their vales;
 In them whatever vegetable springs,
 How lothsome and corrupted, triumphs here,
 The bane of life, of health the sure decay;
 Yet, yet ye swallow, and extol the draught,
 Tho' nervous ails should spring, and vap'rish qualms
 Our senses and our appetites destroy.

Look round, ye sipplers of the poison'd cup
 From foreign plant distill'd! no more repine
 That Nature, sparing of her sacred sweets,
 Hath doom'd you in a wilderness to dwell,
 While round Britannia's streams she kindly rears
 Green sage and wild thyme—These were sure decreed
 As plants of Britain to regale her sons
 With native moisture, more refreshing sweet,
 And more profuse of health and vigour's balm,
 Than all the stems that India can boast.



THE SOW OF FEELING.

Well! I protest there's no such thing as dealing
 With these starch'd poets—with these MEN OF FEELING!
 EPILOGUE to the PRINCE of TUNIS.

MALIGNANT planets! do ye still combine
 Against this wayward, dreary life of mine!
 Has pitiless Oppression—(cruel case!)
 Gain'd sole possession of the human race?
 By cruel hands has every virtue bled,
 And innocence from men to vultures fled!

Thrice happy had I liv'd in Jewish time,
 When swallowing pork or pig was thought a crime;
 My husband long had blest my longing arms,
 Long, long had known Love's sympathetic charms!
 My children too—a little suckling race,
 With all their father growing in their face,
 From their prolific dam had ne'er been torn,
 Nor to the bloody stalls of butchers borne.

Ah! Luxury! to you my being owes
 Its load of misery—its load of woes!
 With heavy heart I saunter all the day,
 Gruntle and murmur all my hours away!
 In vain I try to summon old Desire,
 For fav'rite sports—for wallowing in the mire:
 Thoughts of my husband—of my children slain,
 Turn all my wonted pleasure into pain!
 How oft did we, in Phœbus' warming ray,
 Bask on the humid softness of the clay!
 Oft did his lusty *head* defend my *tail*
 From the rude whispers of the angry gale;
 While nose-refreshing puddles stream'd around,
 And floating odours hail'd the dung-clad ground.

Near by a rustic mill's enchanting clack,
 Where plenteous bushels load the peasant's back,
 In straw-crown'd hovel, there to life we came,
 One boar our father, and one sow our dam:
 While tender infants on their mother's breast,
 A flame divine on either shone confest;
 In riper hours Love's more than ardent blaze
 Inkindled all his passion, all his praise!
 No deadly, sinful passion fir'd his soul;
 Virtue o'er all his actions gain'd controul!
 That cherub which attracts the female heart,
 And makes them soonest with their beauty part,

Attracted mine;—I gave him all my love,
In the recesses of a verdant grove:

'Twas there I list'ned to his warmest vows,
Amidst the pendant melancholy boughs;
'Twas there my trusty lover shook for me
A show'r of acorns from the oaken tree;
And from the teeming earth, with joy, plough'd out
'The root salubrious, with his hardy snout.

But happiness, a floating meteor thou!
That still inconstant art to man and sow,
Left us in gloomiest horrors to reside,
Near by the deep-dy'd sanguinary tide,
Where whetting steel prepares the butch'ring knives,
With greater ease to take the harmless lives
Of cows, and calves, and sheep, and hog, who fear }
The bite of bull-dogs, that incessant tear }
Their flesh, and keenly suck the blood-stilling ear! }

At length the day, th' eventful day drew near,
Detested cause of many a briny tear!
I'll weep till sorrow shall my eye-lids drain,
A tender husband, and a brother slain!
Alas! the lovely languor of his eye,
When the base murd'ers bore him captive by!
His mournful voice! the music of his groans,
Had melted any hearts—but hearts of stones!
O! had some angel at that instant come,
Giv'n me four nimble fingers and a thumb,
The blood-stain'd blade I'd turn'd upon his foe,
And sudden sent him to the shades below—
Where, or Pythagoras' opinion jests,
Beasts are made butchers—butchers chang'd to beasts.

In early times the law had wise decreed,
For human food but reptiles few should bleed;

But monstrous man, still erring from the laws,
 The curse of Heaven on his banquet draws!
 Already has he drain'd the marshes dry
 For frogs, new emblems of his luxury;
 And soon the toad and lizard will come home,
 Pure victims to the hungry glutton's womb:
 Cats, rats and mice, their destiny may mourn,
 In time their carcasses on spits must turn;
 They may rejoice to-day—while I resign
 Life to be number'd 'mongst the *feeling swine*.

AN EXPEDITION TO FIFE AND THE ISLAND OF MAY,
 On board the *BLESSED ENDEAVOUR* of Dunbar,
 Captain ROXBURGH, Commander.

LIST, O ye slumb'ers on the peaceful shore!
 Whose lives are one unvariegated calm
 Of stillness and of sloth: and hear, O nymph!
 In heav'n yclept Pleasure: from your throne
 Effulgent send a heav'nly radiant beam,
 That cheer'd by thee, the Muse may bend her way;
 For from no earthly flight she builds her song,
 But from the bosom of green Neptune's main
 Would fain emerge, and under Phœbe's reign,
 Transmit her numbers to inclining ears.

Now when the choiring songsters quit the groves,
 And solemn sounding whispers lull the spray,
 To Meditation sacred, let me roam
 O'er the blest floods that wash our natal shore,
 And view the wonders of the deep profound,
 While now the western breezes reign around,
 And Boreas, sleeping in his iron cave,
 Regains his strength and animated rage,
 To wake new tempests and inswell new seas.

And now Favonius wings the sprightly gale;
 The willing canvas, swelling with the breeze,
 Give life and motion to our bounding prow,
 While the hoarse boatswain's pipe shrill sounding far,
 Calls all the tars to action Hardy sons!
 Who shudder not at life's devouring gales,
 But smile amidst the tempest-sounding jars,
 Or, 'midst the hollow thunders of the war:
 Fresh sprung from Greenland's cold, they hail with joy
 The happier clime, the fresh autumnal breeze,
 By Syrus guided to allay the heat,
 That else would parch the vigour of their veins.
 Hard change, alas! from petrifying cold
 Instant to plunge to the severest ray
 That burning Dog-star or bright Phœbus sheds.
 Like comet whirling thro' th' ethereal void,
 Now they are redden'd with the solar blaze,
 Now froze and tortur'd with the frigid zone.

Thrice happy Britons! whose well-temper'd clay
 Can face all climes, all tempests, and all seas.
 These are the sons that check the growing war;
 These are the sons that hem Britannia round
 From sudden innovation; awe the shores,
 And make their drooping pendants hail her queen
 And mistress of the globe.—They guard our beds,
 While fearless we enjoy secure repose,
 And all the blessings of a bounteous sky.
 'To them in ferv'rous adoration bend,
 Ye fashion'd Macaronies! whose bright blades
 Were never dimm'd or stain'd in hostile blood,
 But still hang dangling at your feeble thigh,
 While thro' the Mall or Park you shew away,
 Or thro' the drawing-room on tiptoe steal.
 On poop aloft, to messmates laid along,

Some son of Neptune, whose old wrinkl'd brow
 Has bay'd the rattling thunder, tells his tale
 Of dangers, sieges, and of battles dire,
 While they, elate with success of the day,
 Cheer him with happy smiles, or bitter sighs,
 When Fortune with a sourer aspect grins.

Ah! how unstable are the joys of life!
 The pleasures, ah! how few!—Now smile the skies
 With visage mild, and now the thunders shake,
 And all the radiance of the heav'ns deflow'r.
 Thro' the small op'nings of the mainsail broad,
 Lo, Boreas steals and tears him from the yard,
 Where long and lasting he has play'd his part!
 So suffers Virtue. When, in her fair form,
 The smallest flaw is found, the whole decays.
 In vain she may implore with piteous eye,
 And spread her naked pinions to the blast:
 A reputation maim'd finds no repair,
 Till Death, the ghastly monarch, shuts the scene.

And now we gain the May, whose midnight light,
 Like Vestal virgins' off'rings undecay'd,
 To mariners bewilder'd, acts the part
 Of social Friendship, guiding those who err
 With kindly radiance to their destin'd port.

Thanks, kindest Nature! for those floating gems,
 Those green-grown isles, with which you lavish strew
 Great Neptune's empire. But for thee! the main
 Were an uncomfortable mazy flood.
 No guidance then would bless the steersman's skill,
 No resting place would crown the mar'ner's wish,
 When he to distant gales his canvas spreads
 To search new wonders.—Here the verdant shores
 Teem with new freshness, and regale our sight
 With caves that ancient Time, in days of yore,

Sequester'd for the haunt of Druid lone,
 There to remain in solitary cell,
 Beyond the pow'r of mortals to disjoin
 From holy meditation.—Happy now
 To cast our eyes around from shore to shore,
 While by the oozy caverns on the beech
 We wander wild, and listen to the roar
 Of billows murm'ring with incessant noise.

And now by Fancy led, we wander wild
 Where, o'er the rugged steep the buried dead
 Remote lie anchor'd in their parent mould;
 Where a few fading willows point the state
 Of man's decay. Ah, Death! where'er we fly,
 Whether we seek the busy and the gay,
 The mourner or the joyful, there art thou.
 No distant isle, no surly swelling surge,
 E'er aw'd thy progress, or controul'd thy sway,
 To bless us with that comfort, length of days,
 By all aspir'd at, but by few attain'd.

To Fife we steer, of all beneath the sun
 The most unhallow'd 'midst the Scotian plains?
 And here, sad emblem of deceitful times!
 Hath sad Hypocrisy her standard borne.
 Mirth knows no residence, but ghastly Fear
 Stands trembling and appall'd at airy sights.
 Once, only once! reward it, O ye pow'rs!
 Did Hospitality, with open face,
 And winning smile, cheer the deserted sight
 That else had languish'd for the blest return
 Of beauteous day, to dissipate the clouds
 Of endless night, and superstition wild,
 That constant hover o'er the dark abode.
 O happy Lothian! happy thrice her sons!
 Who ne'er yet ventur'd from the southern shore

To tempt Misfortune on the Fifean coast,
 Again with thee we dwell and taste thy joys,
 Where Sorrow reigns not, and where ev'ry gale
 Is fraught with fulness, blest with living hope,
 That fears no canker from the year's decay.



TO SIR JOHN FIELDING,

On his Attempt to Suppress the BEGGAR'S OPERA.

When you censure the age,
 Be cautious and sage,
 Lest the courtiers offended should be;
 When you mention vice or bribe,
 'Tis so pat to all the tribe,
 Each cries, It was levell'd at me. GAY.

'Tis woman that seduces all mankind. FILCH.

BENEATH what cheerful region of the sky
 Shall Wit, shall Humour, and the Muses fly?
 For our's, a cold, inhospitable clime,
 Refuses quarter to the Muse and rhyme;
 If on her brows an envy'd laurel springs,
 They shake its foliage, crop her growing wings,
 That with the plumes of virtue wisely soar,
 And all the follies of the age explore.
 But should old Grub her rankest venom pour,
 And ev'ry virtue with a vice deflow'r,
 Her verse is sacred, Justices agree,—
 Ev'n Justice Fielding signs the wise decree.

Let fortune-dealers, wise predictors! tell
 From what bright planet Justice Fielding fell;
 Augusta trembles at the awful name;
 The darling tongue of Liberty is tame,
 Basely confin'd by him in Newgate chains,
 Nor dare exclaim how harshly Fielding reigns.

In days when ev'ry mercer has his scale
 To tell what pieces lack, how few prevail!
 I wonder not the low-born menial trade
 By partial Justice has aside been laid:
 For she gives no discount for Virtue worn,
 Her aged joints are without mercy torn.

In vain, O GAY! thy muse explor'd the way
 Of yore to banish the Italian lay,
 Gave homely numbers sweet, tho' warmly strong;
 The British chorus blest the happy song:
 Thy manly voice and Albion's then were heard,
 Felt by her sons, and by her sons rever'd:
 Eunuchs, not men, now bear aloft the palm,
 And o'er our senses pour lethargic balm.

The Stage the truest mirror is of life;
 Our passions there revolve in active strife;
 Each character is there display'd to view;
 Each hates his own, tho' well-assur'd 'tis true.
 No marvel then that all the world should own,
 In Peachum's treach'ry Justice Fielding known,
 Since thieves so common are, and, Justice, you
 Thieves to the gallows for reward pursue.
 Had GAY by writing rous'd the stealing trade,
 You'd been less active to suppress your bread;
 For, trust me! when a robber loses ground,
 You lose your living with your forty pound.

'Twas Woman first that snatch'd the luring bait,
 The tempter taught her to transgress and eat;
 Tho' wrong the deed, her quick compunction told,
 She banish'd Adam from an age of gold.

When women now transgress fair Virtue's rules,
 Men are their pupils, and the stews their schools;
 From simple wh—d—m greater sins began
 To shoot, to bloom, to center all in man;

Footpads on Hounslow flourish here to-day,
 The next old Tyburn sweeps them all away;
 For woman's faults, the cause of ev'ry wrong!
 Men robb'd and murder'd, thieves at Tyburn strung.
 In panting breasts to raise the fond alarm,
 Make females in the cause of virtue warm,
 GAY has compar'd them to the summer flow'r,
 The boast and glory of an idle hour;
 When cropt it falls, shrinks, withers, and decays,
 Add to oblivion dark consigns its days.

Hath this a pow'r to win the female heart
 Back from its vice, from virtue ne'er to part;
 If so the wayward virgin will restore,
 And murders, rapes, and plunders be no more.

These were the lays of him who virtue knew,
 Rever'd her dictates, and practis'd them too;
 No idle theorist in her stainless ways,
 He gave the parent Goddess all his days.

O Queensberry! his best and earliest friend,
 ALL that his wit or learning could command;
 Best of patrons! the Muse's only pride!
 Still in her pageant shalt thou first preside;
 No idle pomp that riches can procure,
 Sprung at a start, and faded in an hour,
 But pageant, lasting as the uncropt bay,
 That verdant triumphs with the Muse of GAY.



TO DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

Food for a new edition of his DICTIONARY.

Let Wilkes and Churchill rage no more,
 Tho' scarce provision, learning's good;
 What can these hungries next explore,
 E'en SAMUEL JOHNSON loves our food.

GREAT pedagogue, whose literarian lore,
 With syllable and syllable conjoin'd,
 To transmutate and varify, has learn'd
 'The whole revolving scientific names
 That in the alphabetic columns lie,
 Far from the knowledge of our mortal shapes;
 As we, who never can peroculate
 The miracles by thee miraculiz'd,
 The Muse silential long, with mouth apert,
Would give vibration to stagnatic tongue,
 And loud encomiate thy puissant name,
 Eulogiated from the green decline
 Of Thames's banks to Scoticanian shores,
 Where Lochlomonidian liquids undulize.

To meminate thy name in after times,
 The mighty mayor of each regalian town
 Shall consignate thy work to parchment fair
 In roll burgharian, and their tables all
 Shall fumigate with fumigation strong;
 Scotland, from perpendicularian hills,
 Shall emigrate her fair muttonian store,
 Which late had there in pedestration walk'd,
 And o'er her airy heights perambuliz'd.

Oh, blackest execrations on thy head,
 Edina shameless! tho' he came within
 The bounds of your notation; tho' you knew
 His honorific name, you noted not,

But basely suffer'd him to chariotize
 Far from your tow'rs, with smoke that nubilate,
 Nor drank one amicitial swelling cup
 To welcome him convivial. Bailies all!
 With rage inflated, catenations* tear,
 Nor ever after you be vinculiz'd,
 Since you that sociability denied
 To him whose potent Lexiphanian style
 Words can prolongate, and inswell his page
 With what in others to a line's confin'd.

Welcome, thou verbal potentate and prince!
 To hills and vallies, where emerging oats
 From earth assuage our pauperty to bay,
 And bless thy name, thy dictionarian skill,
 Which there definitive will still remain,
 And oft be speculiz'd by taper blue,
 While youth studentious turn thy folio page.

Have you as yet, in per'patetic mood,
 Regarded with the texture of the eye
 The cave cavernick, where fraternal bard,
 Churchill, depicted pauperated swains,
 With thraldom and bleak want reduced sore;
 Where nature, coloriz'd, so coarsely fades,
 And puts her russet par'pharnalia on?
 Have you as yet the way explorified
 To let lignarian chalice, swell'd with oats,
 Thy orifice approach? Have you as yet,
 With skin fresh rubified by scarlet spheres,
 Apply'd brimstonic unction to your hide,
 To terrify the salamandrian fire
 That from involuntary digits asks
 The strong allaceration?—Or can you swill
 The usquebalian flames of whisky blue

* Catenations, *vide* Chains.

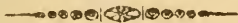
In fermentation strong? Have you applied:
 The kilt aerian to your Anglian thighs,
 And with renunciation assigniz'd
 Your breeches in Londona to be worn?
 Can you, in frigor of Highlandian sky,
 On heathy summits take nocturnal rest?
 It cannot be—You may as well desire
 An alderman leave plumb-puddenian store,
 And scratch the tegument from pottage dish,
 As bid thy countrymen, and thee conjoin'd,
 Forsake stomachic joys. Then hie you home,
 And be a malecontent, that naked hinds,
 On lentiles fed, can make your kingdom quake,
 And tremulate old England libertiz'd!



CHARACTER OF A FRIEND,

In an EPIGRAM which he desired the Author to write.

UNDER this turf, to mould'ring earth consign'd,
 Lies he, who once was fickle as the wind.
 Alike the scenes of good and ill he knew,
 From the chaste temple to the lewdest stew.
 Virtue and vice in him alternate reign'd;
 That, fill'd his mind, and this, his pocket drain'd.
 Till, in the contest they so stubborn grew,
 Death gave the parting blow, and both withdrew.



*EPILOGUE spoken by Mr. WILSON, at the Theatre-Royal, in:
 the Character of an Edinburgh Buck.*

YE who oft finish care in Lethe's cup,
 Who love to swear, and roar, and keep it up,

List to a brother's voice, whose sole delight
Is *sleep* all day, and *riot* all the night.

Last night, when potent draughts of mellow wine
Did sober reason into wit refine;

When lusty Bacchus had contriv'd to drain
The sullen vapours from our shallow brain,
We sallied forth (for Valour's dazzling sun
Up to his bright meridian had run;)

And like renowned Quixotte and his squire;
Spoils and adventures were our sole desire.

First we approach'd a seeming sober dame,
Preceded by a lanthorn's pallid flame,
Borne by a livry'd puppy's servile hand,
The slave obsequious of her stern command.
Curse on those cits, said I, who dare disgrace
Our streets at midnight with a sober face;
Let never tallow-chandler give them light,
To guide them thro' the dangers of the night.
The valet's cane we snatch'd, and dam'me! I
Made the frail lanthorn on the pavement lie.
The guard, still watchful of the lieges' harm,
With slow-pac'd motion stalk'd at the alarm.
Guard, seize the rogues! the angry madam cry'd,
And all the guard with *sieze ta rogue* reply'd.

As in a war, there's nothing judg'd so right
As a concerted and prudential flight;
So we, from guard and scandal to be freed,
Left them the field, and burial of the dead.

Next, we approach'd the bounds of George's square,
Blest place! no watch, no constable comes there.
Now had they borrow'd Argus' eyes who saw us,
All was made dark and desolate as chaos:
Lamps tumbld after lamps, and lost their lustres,
Like doomsday, when the stars shall fall in clusters.

Let fancy paint what dazzling glory grew
 From crystal gems, when Phoebus came in view;
 Each shattered orb ten thousand fragments strews,
 And a new sun in ev'ry fragment shews.
 Hear then, my Bucks! how drunken fate decreed us
 For a nocturnal visit to the Meadows,
 And how we, val'rous champions! durst engage—
 O deed unequal'd—both the Bridge and Cage;
 The rage of per'lous winters which had stood,
 This 'gainst the wind, and that against the flood; [e'er,
 But what nor wind, nor flood, nor heav'n could bend
 We tumbled down, my Bucks, and made surrender.

What are your far-fan'd warriors to us,
 'Bout whom historians make such mighty fuss;
 Posterity may think it was uncommon
 That Troy should be pillag'd for a woman;
 But ours your ten years sieges will excel,
 And justly be esteem'd the nonpareil.
 Our cause is slighter than a dame's betrothing,
 For all these mighty feats have sprung from—*nothing*.

S O N G.

I.

WHERE winding Forth adorns the vale,
 Fond Strephon, once a shepherd gay,
 Did to the rocks his lot bewail,
 And thus address'd his plaintive lay:
 " O Julia! more than lily fair,
 " More blooming than the budding rose,
 " How can thy breast relentless bear
 " A heart more cold than winter's snows.

II.

- " Yet nipping winter's keenest sway
 " But for a short-liv'd space prevails;
 " Spring-time returns and cheers each spray,
 " Scented with Flora's fragrant gales.
 " Come, Julia, come, thy love obey,
 " Thou mistress of angelic charms!
 " Come, smiling like the morn in May,
 " And center in thy Strephon's arms.

III.

- " Else haunted by the fiend Despair,
 " He'll court some solitary grove,
 " Where mortal foot did ne'er repair,
 " But swains oppress'd by hapless love.
 " From the once pleasing rural throng
 " Remov'd, he'll thro' the desert stray,
 " Where Philomela's mournful song
 " Shall join his melancholy lay."

 S O N G.

AMIDST a rosy bank of flowers,
 Young Damon mourn'd his forlorn fate;
 In sighs he spent his languid hours,
 And breath'd his woes in lonely state.

Gay joy no more shall cheer his mind,
 No wanton sports can soothe his care,
 Since sweet Amanda prov'd unkind,
 And left him full of black despair.

His looks that were as fresh as morn
 Can now no longer smiles impart;
 His pensive soul, on sadness borne,
 Is rack'd and torn by Cupid's dart.

Turn, fair Amanda! cheer your swain,
 Unshroud him from his veil of wo;
 Range every charm to ease the pain
 That in his tortur'd breast doth grow.

EPITAPH ON GENERAL WOLFE.

IN worth exceeding, and in virtue great,
 Words would want force his actions to relate.
 Silence, ye bards, eulogiums vain forbear,
 It is enough to say that WOLFE lies here.

*EPIGRAM on the numerous EPITAPHS for General WOLFE;
 For the best of which a Premium of One Hundred Pounds was
 promised.*

THE Muse, a shameless mercenary jade!
 Has now assum'd the arch-tongued lawyer's trade:
 In WOLFE's deserving praises silent she,
 Till flatter'd with the prospect of a fee.

EXTEMPORE

*On seeing Stanzas addressed to Mrs. HARTLEY, Comedian,
 wherein she is described as resembling Mary Queen of Scots.*

HARTLEY resembles Scotland's Queen,
 Some bard enraptur'd cries;
 A flattering bard he is, I ween,
 Or else the PAINTER LIES.

On seeing a LADY paint herself.

WHEN, by some misadventure cross'd,
The banker hath his fortune lost,
Credit his instant need supplies,
And for a moment blinds our eyes:
So Delia, when her beauty's flown,
Trades on a bottom not her own,
And labours to escape detection,
By putting on a false complexion.

On being asked which of three SISTERS were the most beautiful.

WHEN Paris gave his voice on Ida's grove,
For the resistless Venus, queen of love,
'Twas no great task to pass a judgment there,
Where she alone was exquisitely fair;
But here what could his ablest judgment teach,
When wisdom, power, and beauty reign in each;
The youth, nonpluss'd, behov'd to join with me,
And wish the apple had been cut in three.

On the Death of Mr. THOMAS LANCASHIRE, Comedian.

ALAS, poor Tom! how oft, with merry heart,
Have we beheld thee play the Sexton's part!
Each comic heart must now be griev'd to see
The Sexton's dreary part perform'd on thee.

EPIGRAM, on seeing Scales used in a MASON LODGE.

WHY should the brethren met in Lodge
Adopt such aukward measures,

To set their scales and weights to judge
The value of their treasures?

The law laid down from age to age,
How can they well o'ercome it?
For it forbids them to engage
With aught but Line and Plummet.

MY LAST WILL.

WHILE sober folks, in humble prose,
Estate, and goods, and gear dispose,
A poet surely may disperse
His moveables in doggrel verse;
And fearing death my blood will fast chill,
I hereby constitute my last will.

Then wit ye me to have made o'er
To Nature my poetic lore;
To her I give and grant the freedom
Of paying to the bards who need 'em
As many talents as she gave,
When I became the Muse's slave.

Thanks to the god who made me poor!
No lukewarm friends molest my door,
Who always shew a busy care
For being legatee or heir:
Of this stamp none will ever follow
The youth that's favour'd by Apollo.

But to those few who know my case,
Nor thought a poet's friend disgrace,
The following trifles I bequeathe,
And leave them with my kindest breath;
Nor will I burden them with payment
Of debts incurr'd, or coffin raiment,

As yet 'twas never my intent
To pass an Irish compliment.

To JAMIE RAE*, who oft *jocosus*
With me partook of cheering doses,
I leave my SNUFF-BOX to regale
His senses after drowsy meal,
And wake remembrance of a friend
Who lov'd him to his latter end:
But if this pledge should make him sorry,
And argue like *memento mori*,
He may bequeath't 'mong stubborn fellows,
To all the finer feelings callous,
Who thinks that parting breath's a sneeze
To set sensations all at ease.

To OLIPHANT†, my friend, I legate
Those scrolls poetic which he may get,
With ample freedom to correct
Those writs I ne'er could retrospect,
With power to him and his succession
To print and sell a new impression:
And here I fix on Ossian's head
A domicile for Doric reed,
With as much power *ad Musæ bonæ*
As I *in propria persona*.

To HAMILTON* I give the task
Outstanding debts to crave and ask;
And that my Muse he may not dub ill,
For loading him with so much trouble,
My debts I leave him *singulatim*,
As they are mostly *desperatim*.

To WOODS, whose genius can provoke
His passions to the bowl or sock,

* Solicitors at law, and the Poet's intimate friends.

† Late Bookfeller in Edinburgh.

For love to thee, and to the nine,
 Be my immortal Shakespeare thine:
 Here may you thro' the alleys turn,
 Where Falstaff laughs, where heroes mourn,
 And boldly catch the glowing fire
 That dwells in raptures on his lyre.

Now at my dirge (if dirge there be!)
 Due to the Muse and poetry,
 Let HUTCHISON* attend, for none is
 More fit to guide the ceremonies;
 As I in health with him would often
 This clay-built mansion wash and soften,
 So let my friends with him partake
 The gen'rous wine at dirge or wake.—

And I consent to registration
 Of this my will for preservation,
 That patent it may be, and seen
 In WALTER'S Weekly Magazine.
 Witness whereof, these presents wrote are
 By William Blair, the public notar,
 And for the tremor of my hand,
 Are sign'd by him at my command.

R. F. † *his mark.*



CODICIL TO ROB. FERCUSSON'S LAST WILL.

WHEREAS, by test'ment, dated blank,
 Inroll'd in the poetic rank,
 'Midst brighter themes that weekly come
 To make parade at *WALTER'S Drum,
 I there, for certain weighty causes,
 Produc'd some kind bequeathing clauses

* A Tavern-keeper.

† The Publisher of the Weekly Magazine.

And left to friends (as 'tis the custom
 With nothing till our death to trust 'em)
 Some tokens of a pure regard
 From one who liv'd and died a Bard.

If poverty has any crime in
 Teaching mankind the art of rhyming,
 Then, by these presents, know all mortals
 Who come within the Muse's portals,
 That I approve my will aforesaid,
 But think that something might be more said,
 And only now would humbly seek
 The liberty to add and eik
 To test'ment which already made is,
 And duly register'd, as said is.

To TULLOCH †, who, in kind compassion,
 Departed from the common fashion,
 And gave to me, who never paid it,
 Two flasks of port upon my credit;
 I leave the FLASKS as full of air
 As his of ruddy moisture were;
 Nor let him to complain begin,
 He'll get no more of cat than skin.

To WALTER RUDDIMAN, whose pen
 Still screen'd me from the Dunce's Den,
 I leave of phiz a picture, saving
 To him the freedom of engraving,
 There from a copy to embellish,
 And give his work a smarter relish;
 For prints and frontispieces bind do
 Our eyes to stationery window,
 As superfluties in clothes
 Set off and signalize the beaux;

† A wine merchant.

Not that I think in readers' eyes
 My visage will be deem'd a prize;
 But works that others would out-rival,
 At glaring copperplates connive all;
 And prints do well with him that led is
 To shun the substance, hunt the shadows;
 For if a picture, 'tis enough,
 A NEWTON or a *Jamie Duff**.
 Nor would I recommend to WALTER,
 This scheme of copperplates to alter,
 Since others at the samen prices
 Propose to give a dish that nice is,
 Folks will desert his ordinary,
 Unless, like theirs, his dishes vary.

To WILLIAMSON†, and his reseters,
 Dispersing of the burial letters,
 That they may pass with little cost
 Fleet on the wings of Penny-Post;
 Always providing and declaring,
 That PETER shall be ever sparing
 To make, as use is, the demand
 For letters that may come to hand,
 To me address'd, while *locum tenens*
 Of earth and of corporeal penance;
 Where, if he fail, it is my will,
 His legacy is void and null.

Let honest GREENLAW‡ be the staff
 On which I lean for epitaph.
 And that the Muses at my end
 May know I had a learned friend,
 Whate'er of character he's seen
 In me thro' humour or chagrin,

* A fool who attends at funerals.

† The Penny-Post Master.

‡ An excellent classical scholar.

I crave his genius may narrate in
The strength of Ciceronian Latin.

Reserving to myself the pow'r
To alter this at latest hour,
Cum privilegio revocare
Without assigning *ratio quare*:
And I (as in the will before did)
Consent this deed shall be recorded:
In testimonium cujus rei,
These presents are deliver'd by

R. FERGUSSON.



AN E C L O G U E.

'T WAS e'ening whan the speckled gowdspink sang,
Whan new fa'en dew in blobs o' crystal hang;
'Than Will and Sandie thought they'd wrought eneugh,
And loos'd their sair toil'd owsen frae the pleugh:
Before they ca'd their beasts unto the town,
'The lads to draw their breath e'en sat them down:
To the stiff sturdy aik they lean their backs,
While honest Sandy thus begins the cracks. [throat,
San. Ance I could hear the lavrock's shrill-tun'd
And listen to the clattering gowdspink's note;
Ance I could whistle cantily as they,
'To owsen, as they till'd my ruggit clay;
But now I would as leive maist lend my lugs
To tuneless puddocks croaking i' the bogs;
I sigh at hame, a-field am dowie too,
To sowf a tune I'll never crook my mou.

Wil. Foul fa me gif your bridal had na been
Nae langer bygane than sin' Hallow-e'en,
I could hae teil'd you but a warlock's art,
That some daft lyghtlyin quean had stow'n your heart;

Our beisties here will tak their e'ening pluck,
 An' now sin Jock's gane hame the byres to muck,
 Fain would I houp my friend will be inclin'd
 'To gie me a' the secrets o' his mind:
 Heh! Sandie, lad, what dool's come ovr ye now,
 'That you to whistle ne'er will crook your mou.

San. Ah! Willie, Willie, I my date my wae
 Frae what beted me on my bridal day;
 Sair may I rue the hour in which our hands
 Were knit thegither in the haly bands;
 Sin' that I thrive sae ill, in troth I fancy,
 Some fiend or fairy, nae sae very chancy,
 Has driven me, by pauky wiles uncommon,
 'To wed this flyting fury of a woman.

Wil. Ah! Sandie, aften hae I heard you tell,
 Amang the lasses a' she bure the bell;
 And say, the modest glances o' her ein
 Far dang the brightest beauties o' the green;
 You ca'd her ay sae innocent, sae young,
 I thought she kent na how to use her tongue.

San. Before I married her, I'll tak my aith,
 Her tongue was never louder than her breath;
 But now its turn'd sae souple and sae bauld,
 'That Job himsell could scarcely thole the scauld.

Wil. Let her yelp on, be you as calm's a mouse,
 Nor let your whisht be heard into the house;
 Do what she can, or be as loud's she please,
 Ne'er mind her flytes, but set your heart at ease.
 Sit down and blaw your pipe, nor faush your thumb,
 An' there's my hand she'll tire, and soon sing dumb;
 Sooner shou'd Winter's cald confine the sea,
 An' let the sma'est o' our burns rin free;
 Sooner at Yule-day shall the birk be drest,
 Or birds in sapless busses big their nest,

Before a tonguey woman's noisy plea
Shou'd ever be a cause to danton me.

San. Weel could I this abide, but oh! I fear
I'll soon be twin'd o' a' my warldly gear;
My kirstaff now stands gizzen'd at the door,
My cheese-rack toom that ne'er was toom before;
My ky may now rin rowtin' to the hill,
And on the naked yird their milkness spill;
She scenil lays hër hand upon a turn,
Neglects the kebbuck, and forgets the kirn;
I vow my hair-mould milk would poison dogs,
As it stands lapper'd in the dirty cogs.

Before the seed I sell'd my ferra cow,
An' wi' the profit coost a stane o' woo:
I thought, by priggin', that she might hae spun
A plaidie, light, to screen me frae the sun;
But tho' the siller's scant, the cleedin' dear,
She has na ca'd about a wheel the year.
Last owk but ane I was frae lame a day,
Buying a threave or twa o' bedding strae:
O' ilka thing the woman had her will,
Had fouth o' meal to bake, and hens to kill:
But hyn awa' to Edinbrough scour'd she
'To get a making o' her fav'rite tea;
And 'cause I left na her the weary clink,
She pawn'd the very trunchers frae my bink.

Wil. Her tea! ah! wae betide sic costly gear,
Or them that ever wad the price o't spear.
Sin' my auld gutcher first the warld knew,
Fowk had na found the Indies whare it grew.
I mind mysell, it's nae sae lang sin' syne,
Whan antie Marion did her stamack tyne,
That Davs our gard'ner came frae Apple-bog,
An' gae her tea to tak by way o' drog.

San. Whan ilka herd for cauld his fingers rubs,
 An' cakes o' ice are seen upo' the dubs;
 At morning, whan frae pleugh or fauld I come,
 I'll see a bra' reek rising frae my lum,
 An' ablins think to get a rantin blaze,
 To fley the frost awa', and tost my taes;
 But whan I shoot my nose in, ten to ane
 If I weelfardly see my ane hearthstane;
 She round the ingle wi' her gimmers sits,
 Crammin' their gabbies wi' her nicest bits,
 While the gudeman out-by maun fill his crap
 Frae the milk coggie, or the parritch cap.

Wil. Sandy, gif this were ony common plea,
 I should the lealest o' my counsel gie;
 But mak or middle betwixt man an' wife,
 Is what I never did in a' my life.
 It's wearin' on now to the tail o' May,
 An' just between the beer-seed and the hay;
 As lang's an orra morning may be spar'd,
 Stap your wa's east the haugh, an' tell the laird;
 For he's a man weel vers'd in a' the laws,
 Kens baith their outs an' ins, their cracks an' flaws,
 An' ay right gleg, whan things are out o' joint,
 At sattlin o' a nice or kittle point.
 But yonder's Jock, he'll ca' your owsen hame,
 And tak thir tidings to your thrawart dame,
 That ye're awa' ae peacefu' meal to prie,
 An' tak your supper kail or sow'ns wi' me.



AN ECLOGUE,

*To the Memory of Dr. WILLIAM WILKIE, late Professor of
Natural Philosophy in the University of St. Andrews.*

GEORDIE AND DAVIE.

Geordie.

BLAW saft, my reed, and kindly to my maen,
Weel may ye thole a saft an' dowie strain;
Nae mair to you shall shepherds in a ring,
Wi' blythness skip, or lasses lilt an' sing;
Sic sorrow now maun sadden ilka e'e,
An' ilka waefu' shepherd grieve wi' me.

Dav. Wharefore begin a sad an' dowie strain,
Or banish liling frae the Fifan plain?
'Tho' simmer's gane, an' we nae langer view
The blades o' claver wat wi' pearls o' dew.
Cauld Winter's bleakest blasts we'll eithly cower,
Our eldin's driven, an' our har'st is ower;
Our rucks fu' thick are stackit i' the yard,
For the Yule-feast a sautit mart's prepar'd;
'The ingle-nook supplies the simmer fields,
An' aft as mony gleefu' moments yields.
Swith man! fling a' your sleepy springs awa',
An' on your canty whistle gie's a blaw:
Blythness, I trow, maun lighten ilka e'e,
An' ilka canty callant sing like me.

Geo. Na, na! a canty spring wad now impart
Just threefald sorrow to my heavy heart.
'Tho' to the weet my ripen'd aits had fawn,
Or shake-winds ower my rigs wi' pith had blawn,
To this I could hae said, "I carena by,"
Nor fund occasion now my cheeks to dry.
Crosses like thae, or lack o' warld's gear,
Are naithing whan we tyne a friend that's dear.

Ah! waes me for you, Willie! mony a day
 Did I wi' you on yon broom-thackit brae
 Hound aff my sheep, an' lat them careless gang
 To harken to your cheary tale or sang;
 Sangs that for ay, on Caledonia's strand,
 Shall fit the foremost 'mang her tunefu' band.

I dreamt yestreen his deadly wraith I saw
 Gang by my ein as white's the driven snaw;
 My colley, Ringie, youff'd an' yowl'd a' night,
 Cour'd an' crap near me in an unco fright,
 I waken'd fley'd, an' shook baith lith and limb;
 A cauldness took me, an' my sight grew dim:
 I kent that it forspack approachin' wae
 When my poor doggie was disturbit sae.
 Nae sooner did the day begin to dawn,
 Than I beyont the know fu' speedy ran,
 Where I was keppit wi' the heavy tale,
 That sets ilk dowie sangster to bewail.

Dav. An' wha on Fifan bents can weel refuse
 To gie the tear o' tribute to his Muse?—
 Fareweel ilk cheery spring, ilk canty note,
 Be daffin an' ilk idle play forgot;
 Bring, ilka herd, the mournfu', mournfu' boughs,
 Rosemary sad, and ever dreary yews;
 'Thae lat be steepit i' the saut, saut tear,
 To weet wi' hallow'd draps his sacred bier,
 Whase sangs will ay in Scotland be rever'd,
 While slow-gawn owsen turn the flow'ry swaird;
 While bonny lambies lick the dews of spring,
 While gaudsmen whistle, or while birdies sing.

Geo. 'Twas na for weel tim'd verse or sangs alane
 He bore the bell frae ilka shepherd swain.
 Nature to him had gi'en a kindly lore,
 Deep a' her mystic ferlies to explore:

For a' her secret workings he could gie
 Reasons that wi' her principles agree.
 Ye saw yoursel how weel his mailin' thrive,
 Ay better faugh'd an' snodit than the lave;
 Lang had the thistles an' the dockans been
 In use to wag their taps upo' the green,
 Whare now his bonny rigs delight the view,
 An' thriving hedges drink the caller dew*.

Dav. They tell me, Geordie, he had sic a gift,
 That scarce a starnie blinkit frae the lift,
 But he would some auld warld name for't find,
 As gart him keep it freshly in his mind:
 For this some ca'd him an uncanny wight;
 The clash gaed round, "he had the second sight;"
 A tale that never fail'd to be the pride
 O' grannies spinnin' at the ingle-side.

Geo. But now he's gane, an' Fame that, whan alive,
 Seenil lats ony o' her vot'ries thrive,
 Will frae his shinin' name a' motes withdraw,
 And on her loudest trump his praises blaw.
 Lang may his sacred banes untroubled rest!
 Lang may his truff in gowans gay be drest!
 Scholars and bards unheard of yet shall come,
 And stamp memorials on his grassy tomb,
 Which in yon ancient kirk-yard shall remain,
 Fam'd as the urn that had the MANTUAN swain.

*ELEGY on the Death of Mr. DAVID GREGORY, late Professor
 of Mathematics in the University of St. Andrews.*

Now mourn, ye college masters a'!
 An' frae your ein a tear let fa',

* Dr. Wilkie had a farm near St. Andrews, on which he made improvements.

Fam'd GREGORY death has ta'en awa'
 Without remeid;
 The skaith ye've met wi's nae that sma',
 Sin' Gregory's dead.

The students too will miss him sair,
 Tø school them weel his eident care,
 Now they may mourn for ever mair,
 They hae great need;
 They'll hip the maist feck o' their lear,
 Sin' Gregory's dead.

He could, by Euclid, prove lang syne
 A ganging point compos'd a line;
 By numbers too, he could divine,
 Whan he did read,
 That three times three just made up nine;
 But now he's dead.

In Algebra weel skill'd he was,
 An' kent fu' weel proportion's laws;
 He could mak clear baith B's and A's
 Wi' his lang head;
 Rin owr surd roots but cracks or flaws;
 But now he's dead.

Weel vers'd was he in architecture,
 An' kent the nature of the sector,
 Upo' baith globes he weel cou'd lecture,
 An' gar's tak heed;
 O' Geometry he was the Hector;
 But now he's dead.

Sae weel's he'd fley the students a',
 When they were skelpin' at the ba',
 They took leg-bail, an' ran awa'
 Wi' pith an' speed;

We winna get a sport sae bra',
 Sin' Gregory's dead.

Great 'casion hae we a' to weep,
 An' cleed our skins in mournin' deep,
 For Gregory death will fairly keep
 To tak his nap;
 He'll till the resurrection sleep
 As sound's a tap.



THE DAFT DAYS.

Now mirk December's dowie face
 Glows owr the rigs wi' sour grimace,
 While, thro' his minimum o' space,
 The bleer-ey'd sun,
 Wi' blinkin' light, and stealing pace,
 His race doth run.

Frae naked groves nae birdie sings,
 To shepherd's pipe nae hillock rings,
 The breeze nae od'rous flavour brings
 Frae Borean cave,
 An' dwynin' Nature droops her wings,
 Wi' visage grave.

Mankind but scanty pleasure glean
 Frae snawy hill or barren plain,
 Whan Winter, 'midst his nipping train,
 Wi' frozen spear,
 Sends drift owr a' his bleak domain,
 And guides the weir.

Auld Reikie! thou'rt the canty hole,
 A bield for mony a cauldribe soul,

Wha snugly at thine ingle loll,
 Baith warm and coult;
 While round they gar the bicker roll,
 To weet their mouth.

When merry Yule-day comes, I trow,
 You'll scantlins fin' a hungry mou;
 Sma' are our cares, our stamacks fou
 O' gusty gear,
 An' kickshaws, strangers to our view
 Sin' fairn-year.

Ye browster wives, now busk ye bra',
 An' fling your sorrows far awa';
 Then come an' gie's the tither blaw
 O' reaming ale,
 Mair precious than the well o' Spa,
 Our hearts to heal.

Then, tho' at odds wi' a' the warl',
 Amang oursels we'll never quarrel;
 Tho' Discord gie a cankar'd snarl
 To spoil our glee,
 As lang's there's pith into the barrel
 We'll drink an' 'gree.

Fidlers, your pins in temper fix,
 And rozet weel your fiddle-sticks,
 But banish vile Italian tricks
 Frae out your quorum,
 Nor fortes wi' pianos mix,
 Gie's Tullochgorum.

For nought can cheer the heart sae weil
 As can a canty Highland reel,
 It even vivifies the heel
 To skip and dance:

Lifeless is he wha canna feel
Its influence.

Let mirth abound, let social cheer
Invest the dawning of the year;
Let blithesome innocence appear
To crown our joy,
Nor envy, wi' sarcastic sneer,
Our bliss destroy.

And thou, great god of *Aqua Vita*!
Wha sways the empire o' this city,
When fou we're sometimes capernoity,
Be thou prepar'd
To hedge us frae that black banditti,
The City-Guard.

THE KING'S BIRTH-DAY IN EDINBURGH.

Oh! qualis burly-burly fuit, si forte vidisses.

POLEMO-MIDDINIA.

I SING the day sae aften sung,
Wi' which our lugs hae yearly rung,
In whase loud praise the Muse has dung
A' kind o' print;
But wow! the limmer's fairly flung;
There's naithing in't.

I'm fain to think the joy's the same
In London town as here at hame,
Whare fouk o' ilka age and name,
Baith blind an' cripple,
Forgather aft, O fy for shame!
To drink an' tipple.

O Muse, be kind, an' dinna fash us
To flee awa' beyont Parnassus,

Nor seek for Helicon to wash us,
 That heath'nish spring;
 Wi' Highland whisky scour our hawses,
 An' gar us sing.

Begin then, dame, ye've drunk your fill,
 You woudna hae the tither gill?
 You'll trust me, mair would do you ill,
 An' ding you doitet:
 Troth 'twould be sair against my will
 To hae the wyte o't.

Sing then, how, on the fourth of June,
 Our bells screed aff a loyal tune,
 Our ancient castle shoots at noon,
 Wi' flag-staff buskit,
 Frae which the soger blades come down
 To cock their musket.

Oh willawins! Mons Meg, for you,
 'Twas firing crack't thy muckle mou;
 What black mishanter gart ye spew
 Baith gut an' ga'!
 I fear they bang'd thy belly fu'
 Against the law.

Right seenil am I gi'en to bannin,
 But, by my saul, ye was a cannon,
 Cou'd hit a man had he been stannin
 In shire o' Fife,
 Sax lang Scots miles ayont Cläckmannan,
 An' tak his life.

The hills in terror wou'd cry out,
 An' echo to thy dinsome rout;
 The herds wou'd gather in their nowt,
 'That glowr'd wi' wonder,

Hassins asley'd to bide thereout
 To hear thy thunder.

Sing likewise, Muse, how Blue-gown bodies,
 Like scar-craws new ta'en down frae woodies,
 Come here to cast their clouted duddies,
 An' get their pay:
 Than them what magistrate mair proud is
 On king's birth-day?

On this great day the city-guard,
 In military art weel lear'd,
 Wi' powder'd pow and shaven beard,
 Gang thro' their functions,
 By hostile rabble seldom spar'd
 O' clatty unctions.

O soldiers! for your ain dear sakes,
 For Scotland's, alias, *Land o' Cakes*,
 Gie not her bairns sic deadly pakes,
 Nor be sae rude,
 Wi' firelock or Lochaber aix,
 As spill their blude.

Now round an' round the serpents whiz,
 Wi' hissing wrath and angry pliz;
 Sometimes they catch a gentle gizz,
 Alack-a-day!
 An' singe wi' hair-devouring bizz,
 Its curls away.

Shou'd th' owner patiently keek round,
 To view the nature o' his wound,
 Dead pussie, draggled thro' the pond,
 Taks him a lounder,
 Whilk lays his honour on the ground
 As flat's a flounder.

The Muse maun also now implore
 Auld wives to steek ilk hole an' bore;
 If badrins slip but to the door,
 I fear, I fear,
 She'll nae lang shank upo' all four
 This time o' year.

Neist day ilk hero tells his news,
 O' crackit crowns and broken brows,
 An' deeds that here forbid the Muse
 Her theme to swell,
 Or time mair precious to abuse
 Their crimes to tell,

She'll rather to the fields resort,
 Whare music gars the day seem short,
 Whare doggies play, and lambies sport,
 On gowany braes,
 Whare peerless Fancy hads her court,
 And tunes her lays.

CALLER OYSTERS.

Happy the man who, free from care and strife,
 In silken or in leathern purse retains
 A splendid shilling. He nor hears with pain
 New OYSTERS cry'd, nor sighs for chearful ale.

PHILLIPS.

O' a' the waters that can hobble
 A fishing yole or sa'mon coble,
 An' can reward the fisher's trouble,
 Or south or north,
 There's nane sae spacious an' sae noble
 As Frith o' Forth.

To Lucky Middlemist's loup in,
 An' sit fu' snug
 Owr oysters and a dram o' gin,
 Or haddock lug.

Whan auld Saunt Giles, at aught o'clock
 Gars merchant lowns their shopies lock,
 There we adjourn wi' hearty fock
 To birle our bodles,
 An' get wharewi' to crack our joke,
 An' clear our noddles.

Whan Phœbus did his winnocks steek,
 How aften at that ingle cheek
 Did I my frosty fingers beek,
 An' prie gude fare!
 I trow there was na hame to seek
 Whan steghin there.

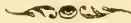
While glakit fools, owr rife o' cash,
 Pamper their wames wi' fousom trash,
 I think a chiel may gayly pass;
 He's nae ill boden
 That gusts his gab wi' oyster sauce,
 An' hen well sodden,

At Musselbrough, an' eke Newhaven,
 The fisher wives will get top livin,
 When lads gang out on Sunday's even
 To treat their joes,
 An' tak o' fat pandores a priven,
 Or mussel brose.

Then sometimes, ere they flit their doup,
 They'll ablins a' their siller coup
 For liquor clear frae cutty stoup,
 To weet their wizen,

An' swallow ovr a dainty soup,
 For fear they gizen.

A' ye wha canna staun sae sicker,
 Whan twice you've toom'd the big-ars'd bicker,
 Mix caller oysters wi' your liquor,
 An' I'm your debtor,
 If greedy priest or drouthy vicar
 Will thole it better.



BRAID CLAITH.

YE wha are fain to hae your name
 Wrote i' the bonny book o' Fame,
 Let Merit nae pretension claim
 To laurel'd wreath,
 But hap ye weel, baith back and wame,
 In gude Braid Claith.

He that some ells o' this may fa',
 An' slae black hat on pow like snaw,
 Bids bauld to bear the grec awa',
 Wi' a' this graith,
 Whan beinly clad wi' shell fu' brow
 O' gude Braid Claith.

Waesuck for him wha has nae feck o't!
 For he's a gowk they're sure to geck at,
 A chiel that ne'er will be respekkit,
 While he draws breath,
 Till his four quarters are bedeckit
 Wi' gude Braid Claith.

On Sabbath-days the barber spark,
 Whan he has done wi' scrapin wark,

Could lavrocks, at the dawnin' day,
 Could linties, chirmin' frae the spray,
 Or todlin' burns that smoothly play
 Owr gowden bed,
 Compare wi' Birks o' Invermay?
 But now they're dead.

O Scotland! that could ance afford
 To bang the pith o' Roman sword,
 Winna your sons, wi' joint accord,
 To battle speed,
 And fight till Music be restor'd,
 Whilk now lies dead?



H A L L O W F A I R.

AT Hallowmas, whan nights grow lang,
 And starnies shine fu' clear,
 Whan fock, the nippin cauld to bang,
 Their winter hapwarms wear;
 Near Edinburgh a fair there had,
 I wat there's nane whase name is,
 For strappin dames and sturdy lads,
 And cap and stoup, mair famous
 Than it that day.

Upo' the tap o' ilka lum
 The sun began to keek,
 And bade the trig-made maidens come
 A sightly joe to seek
 At Hallow-fair, whare browsters rare
 Keep gude ale on the gantries,
 And dinna scrimp ye o' a skair
 O' kebbucks frae their pantries
 Fu' saut that day.

Here kintry John in bannet blue,
 An' eke his Sunday's claes on,
 Rins after Meg wi' rokelay new,
 An' sappy kisses lays on;
 She'll tauntin say, Ye silly coof!
 Be o' your gab mair sparin;
 He'll tak the hint, and criesh her loof
 Wi' what will buy her fairin,
 To chow that day.

Here chapmen billics tak their stand,
 An' shaw their bonny wallies;
 Wow, but they lie fu' gleg aff' hand
 To trick the silly fallows;
 Heh, Sirs! what cairds and tinklers come,
 An' ne'er-do-weel horse coupers,
 An' spae-wives fenzying to be dumb,
 Wi' a siclike landloupers,
 To thrive that day.

Here Sawny cries frae Aberdeen,
 " Come ye to me fa need;
 " The brawest shanks that e'er were seen
 " I'll sell ye cheap an' guid.
 " I wyt they are as protty hose
 " As come frae weyer or leem:
 " Here tak a rug, an' shaw's your pose;
 " Forseeeth my ain's but teen
 " An' light the day."

Ye wives, as ye gang thro' the fair,
 O mak your bargains hooly!
 O' a' thir wylie lowns beware,
 Or fegs they will ye spulzie.
 For fairn-year Meg Thamson got,
 Frae thir mischievous villains,

A sca'd bit o' a penny note,
 That lost a score o' shillins
 To her that day.

The dinlin' drums alarm our ears,
 The serjeant screechs fu' loud,
 " A' gentlemen and volunteers
 " That wish your country gude,
 " Come here to me, and I sall gie
 " Twa guineas an' a crown,
 " A' bowl o' punch that like the sea
 " Will soun a lang dragoon
 Wi' ease this day."

Without the cuissers prance and nicher,
 An' o'er the ley-rig scud;
 In tents the carles bend thè bicker,
 An' rant an' roar like wud.
 Than there's sic yellowchin and din,
 Wi' wives and wee-anes gablin,
 That ane might trow they were a-kin
 To a' the tongues at Babylon,
 Confus'd that day.

Whan Phœbus ligs in Thetis' lap,
 Auld Reikie gies them shelter,
 Whare cadgily they kiss the cap,
 An' ca't round helter-skelter.
 Jock Bell gaed furth to play his freaks,
 Great cause he had to rue it,
 For frae a stark Lochaber aix
 He gat a clamehewit,
 Fu' sair that night.

" Ohon!" quo' he, " I'd rather be
 " By sword or bagnet stickit,

“ Than hae my crown or body wi’
 “ Sic deadly weapons nickit.”
 Wi’ that he gat anither straik
 Mair weighty than before,
 That gar’d his feckless body aik,
 An’ spew the rickin gore,
 Fu’ red that night.

He peching on the cawsey lay,
 O’ kicks and cuffs well sair’d;
 A Highland aith the sergeant gae,
 “ She maun pe see our guard.”
 Out spak the weirlike corporal,
 “ Pring in ta drucken sot.”
 They trail’d him ben, an’ by my saul,
 He paid his drucken groat
 For that neist day.

Gude fock as ye come frae the fair,
 Bide yont frae this black squad;
 There’s nae sic savages elsewhere
 Allow’d to wear cockade.
 Than the strong lion’s hungry maw,
 Or tusk o’ Russian bear,
 Frae their wanruly fellin paw
 Mair cause ye hae to fear
 Your death that day.

A wee soup drink does unco weel
 To had the heart aboon;
 It’s gude as lang’s a canny chiel
 Can stand steeve in his shoon,
 But gin a birkie’s owr weel said,
 It gars him aften stammer

To ploys that bring him to the guard,
 An' eke the Council-chaumir,
 Wi' shame that day,

ODE TO THE BEE.

HERDS, blythsome tune your canty reeds,
 An' welcome to the gowany meads
 'The pride o' a' the insect thrang,
 A stranger to the green sae lang;
 Unfald ilk buss an' ilka brier,
 'The bounties o' the gleesome year,
 'To him whase voice delights the spring,
 Whase sougths the safest slumbers bring.

The trees in simmer-cleething drest,
 The hillocks in their greenest vest,
 'The brawest flow'rs rejoic'd we see,
 Disclose their sweets, and ca' on thee,
 Blythely to skim on wanton wing,
 'Thro' a' the fairy haunts o' spring.

Whan fields hae gat their dewy gift,
 An' dawnin breaks upon the lift,
 Then gang your wa's thro' hight and how,
 Scek caller haugh or sunny know,
 Or ivy'd craig, or burn-bank brae,
 Whare Industry shall bid you gae,
 For hiney, or for waxen store,
 'To ding sad poortith frae the door.
 Cou'd feckless creature, Man, be wise,
 'The simmer o' his life to prize,
 In winter he might fend fu' bauld,
 His eild unkend to nippin cauld,

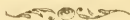
Yet thir, alas! are antrin fock
 That lade their scape wi' winter stock.
 Auld age maist feckly glowrs right dour
 Upo' the ailings o' the poor,
 Wha hope for nae comforting, save
 That dowie dismal house the grave.
 Then feeble Man, be wise, tak tent
 How Industry can fetch content:
 Behad the bees whare'er they wing,
 Or thro' the bonny bowers o' spring,
 Whare vi'lets or whare roses blaw,
 An' siller dew-draps nightly fa',
 Or whan on open bent they're seen,
 On hether hill or thistle green;
 The hiney's still as sweet that flows
 Frae thistle cauld, or kendling rose.

Frae this the human race may learn
 Reflection's hiney'd draps to earn,
 Whether they tramp life's thorny way,
 Or thro' the sunny vineyard stray.

Instructive bee! attend me still,
 Owr a' my labours sey your skill:
 For thee shall hiney-suckles rise,
 Wi' lading to your busy thighs,
 An' ilka shrub surround my cell,
 Whareon ye like to hum an' dwell:
 My trees in bourachs owr my ground
 Shall fend ye frae ilk blast o' wind:
 Nor e'er shall herd, wi' ruthless spike,
 Delve out the treasures frae your bike;
 But in my fence be safe, an' free
 To live, an' work, an' sing like me.

Like thee, by Fancy wing'd, the Muse
 Scuds ear' an' heartsome owr the dews,

Fu' vogie, an' fu' blythe to crap
 The winsome flow'rs frae Nature's lap,
 Twining her living garlands there,
 That lyart Time can ne'er impair.



ON SEEING A BUTTERFLY IN THE STREET.

DAFT gowk, in macaroni dress
 Are ye come here to shaw your face,
 Bowden wi' pride o' simmer gloss,
 To cast a dash at Reikie's cross;
 An glowr at mony a twa-legg'd creature,
 Flees, braw by art, tho' worms by nature?

Like country laird in city cleeding,
 Ye're come to town to lear' good breeding:
 So bring ilk darling toast an' fashion
 In vogue amang the flee creation,
 That they, like buskit belles an' beaus,
 May crook their mu' fu' sour at those
 Whase weird is still to creep, alas!
 Unnotic'd 'mang the humble grass;
 While ye, wi' wings new buskit trim,
 Can far frae yird an' reptiles skim;
 Newfangle grown wi' new got form,
 You soar aboon your mither worm.

Kind Nature lent but for a day
 Her wings to mak ye sprush an' gay;
 In her habuliments a while
 Ye may your former sell beguile,
 An' ding awa' the vexing thought
 O' hourly dwyning into nought,
 By beenging to your foppish brither's,
 Black corbies dress'd in peacocks' feathers;

Like thee they dander here an' there,
 Whan simmer's blinks are warm an' fair,
 An' loo to snuff the healthy balm
 Whan e'ening spreads her wing sae calm;
 But whan she grins an' glowrs sae dow'r
 Frae Borean houff in angry show'r,
 Like thee they scour frae street or field,
 An' hap them in a lyther bield;
 For they were never made to dree
 The adverse gloom o' Fortune's eie,
 Nor ever pried life's pining woes,
 Nor pu'd the prickles wi' the rose.

Poor Butterfly! thy case I mourn,
 To green kail-yard and fruits return:
 How could you troke the mavis' note
 For "penny pies all-piping hot?"
 Can lintie's music be compar'd
 Wi' gruntles frae the City Guard?
 Or can our flow'rs at ten hours bell
 The gowan or the spink excell?

Now shou'd our slates wi' hailstones ring,
 What cabbage-fauld wad screen your wing;
 Say, fluttering fairy; wer't thy hap
 To light beneath braw Nanny's cap,
 Wad shē, proud butterfly of May!
 In pity lat you skaithless stay?
 The furies glancing frae her ein
 Wad rug your wings o' siller sheen,
 That, wae for thee! far, far outvy
 Her Paris artist's finest dye;
 Then a your bonny sprains wad fall,
 An' you a worm be left to crawl.

To sic mishanter rins the laird
 Wha quats his ha'-house and kail-yard,

Grows politician, scours to court,
 Whare he's the laughing stock and sport
 O' Ministers, wha jeer an' jibe,
 An' heeze his hopes wi' thought o' bribe,
 Till in the end they flae him bare,
 Leave him to poortith, and to care.
 Their flectchin words owr late he sees,
 He trudges hame, repines, and dies.

Sic be their fa' wha dirk thir ben
 In blackest business nae their ain;
 An' may they scad their lips fu' leal,
 That dip their spoons in ither's kail.



ODE TO THE GOWDSPINK.

FRAE fields where Spring her sweets has blawn
 Wi' caller verdure our the lawn,
 The Gowdspink comes in new attire,
 The brawest 'mang the whistling choir,
 That, ere the sun can clear his ein,
 Wi' glib notes sane the simmer's green.

Sure Nature herried mony a tree,
 For sprains and bonny spats to thee:
 Nae mair the rainbow can impart
 Sic glowing ferlies o' her art,
 Whase pencil wrought its freaks at will
 On thee, the sey-piece o' her skill.
 Nae mair thro' straths in simmer dight
 We seek the rose to bless our sight;
 Or bid the bonny wa'-flowers sprout
 On yonder Ruin's lofty snout.
 Thy shining garments far outstrip
 The cherries upo' Hebe's lip,

And fool the tints that Nature chose
To busk an' paint the crimson rose.

'Mang men, wae's-heart! we aften find
The brawest drest want peace o' mind,
While he that gangs wi' ragged coat
Is weel contentit wi' his lot.

Whan wand wi' glewy birdlime's set,
'To steal far aff your dautit mate,
Blyth wad ye change your cleething gay
In lieu of lavrock's sober gray.

In vain thro' woods you sair may ban
The envious treachery of man,
That wi' your gowden glister ta'en,
Still hunts you on the simmer's plain,
And traps you 'mang the sudden fa's
O' winter's dreery dreepin snaws.

Now steekit frae the gowany field,
Frae ilka fav'rite houff and bield,
But mergh, alas! to disengage
Your bonny buik frae fettering cage,
Your free-born bosom beats in vain
For darling liberty again.

In window hung, how aft we see
Thee keek around at warblers free,
That carol saft, and sweetly sing
Wi' a' the blythness o' the spring?
Like Tantalus they hing you here
To spy the glories o' the year;
And tho' you're at the burnie's brink,
They douna suffer you to drink.

Ah, Liberty! thou bonny dame,
How wildly wanton is the stream,
Round whilk the birdies a' rejoice,
An' hail you wi' a gratefu' voice.

The Gowdspink chatters joyous here,
 And courts wi' gleesome sangs his peer:
 The Mavis frae the new-bloom'd thorn
 Begins his lauds at earest morn;
 And herd lowns loupin o'er the grass
 Needs far less flecthing till his lass,
 Than paughty damsels bred at courts
 Wha thraw their mou's, and take the dorts;
 But, rest of thee, fient flee we care
 For a' that life ahint can spare.

The Gowdspink, that sae lang has kend
 The happy sweets (his wonted friend),
 Her sad confinement ill can brook
 In some dark chaumer's dowy nook;
 Tho' Mary's hand his nebb supplies,
 Unkend to hunger's painfu' cries,
 Ev'n beauty canna chear the heart
 Frae life, frae liberty apart;
 For now we tyne its wonted lay,
 Sae lightsome sweet, sae blythly gay.

Thus Fortune aft a curse can gie,
 To wyle us far frae liberty;
 Then tent her syren smiles wha list,
 I'll ne'er envy your girdel's grist;
 For whan fair Freedom smiles nae mair,
 Care I for life? Shame fa' the hair;
 A field o'ergrown wi' rankest stubble,
 The essence o' a paltry bubble.



CALLER WATER.

WHAN father Adie first pat spade in
 The bonny yard o' ancient Eden,

His amry had nae liquor laid in
 To fire his mou',
 Nor did he thole his wife's upbraidin
 For being fou.

A caller burn o' siller sheen,
 Ran cannily out ovr the green,
 And whan our gutcher's drouth had been
 To bide right sair,
 He loutit down and drank bedeen
 A dainty skair.

His bairns had a' before the flood
 A langer tak o' flesh an' blood,
 And on mair pithy shanks they stood
 Than Noah's line,
 Wha still hae been a feckless brood
 Wi' drinking wine.

The fudlin Bardies now-a-days
 Rin maukin-mad in Bacchus' praise,
 And limp and stoiter thro' their lays
 Anacreontic,
 While ilk his sea of wine displays
 As big's the Pontic.

My Muse will nae gae far frae hame,
 Or scour a' airths to hound for fame;
 In troth the jillet ye might blame
 For thinking on't,
 Whan aithly she can find the theme
 Of *aqua font*.

This is the name that doctors use
 Their patients noddles to confuse;
 Wi' simples clad in terms abstruse,
 They labour still,

In kittle words to gar ye roose
 Their want o' skill.

But we'll hae nae sick clitter-clatter,
 And briefly to expound the matter,
 It shall be ca'd guid Caller Water,
 Than whilk I trow,
 Few drugs in doctor's shops are better
 For me or you.

Tho' joints be stiff as ony rung,
 Your pith wi' pain be sairly dung,
 Be you in Caller Water flung
 Out o'er the lugs,
 'Twill mak ye suple, swack and young,
 Withouten drugs.

Tho' cholic or the heart-scad tease us,
 Or any inward dwaam should sieze us,
 It masters a' sic fell diseases,
 That would ye spulzie,
 And brings them to a canny crisis
 Wi' little tulzie.

Wer't na for it the bonny lasses
 Wou'd glow'r nae mair in keeking glasses,
 And soon tine dint o' a' the graces
 That aft convey
 In gleefu' looks and bonny faces,
 To catch our ein.

The fairest than might die a maid,
 And Cupid quit his shooting trade,
 For wha thro' clarty masquerade
 Could then discover,
 Whether the features under shade
 Were worth a lover?

Ye need na think to fleetch or cox;
 “ Come shaw’s your gear;
 “ Ae scabbit yew spills twenty flocks,
 “ Ye’s nae be here.”

Now at the door they’ll raise a plea;
 Crack on, my lads!—for flyting’s free;
 For gin you should tongue-taket be,
 The mair’s the pity,
 Whan scalding but and ben we see
Pendente lite.

The Lawyers’ skelfs, and Printers’ presses
 Grain unco sair wi’ weighty cases;
 The clark in toil his pleasure places,
 To thrive bedeen;
 At five-hour’s bell scribes shaw their faces,
 And rake their ein.

The country fock to lawyers crook
 “ Ah! weels me on your bonny buik!
 “ The benmost part o’ my kist nook
 “ I’ll ripe for thee,
 “ And willing ware my hindmost rook:
 “ For my decree.”

But law’s a draw-well unco deep,
 Withouten rim fock out to keep;
 A donnart cheel, whan drunk, may dreep,
 Fu’ sleely in,
 But finds the gate baith stay an’ steep,
 Ere out he win.



How he may get his buik weel clad,
And fill his guts.

The farmers sons, as yap as sparrows,
Are glad, I trow, to flee the barras,
And whistle to the plow and harrows
At barley seed:

What writer wadna gang as far as
He cou'd for bread?

After their yokin, I wat weel
They'll stoo the kebbuck to the heel
Eith can the plough-stilts gar a chiel
Be unco vogie,
Clean to lick aff his crowdy-meal,
And scart his cogie.

Now mony a fallow's dung adrift
To a' the blast beneath the lift,
And tho' their stamack's aft in tift
In vacance-time,
Yet seenil do they ken the rift
O' stappit wame.

Now gin a notar shou'd be wanted,
You'll find the pillars gayly planted;
For little thing protests are granted
Upo' a bill,
And weightiest matters covenanted
For half a gill.

Nae body taks a morning dribb
O' Holland gin frae Robin Gibb;
And tho' a dram to Rob's mair sib
Than is his wife,
He maun tak time to daut his rib,
Till siller's rife.

Her een were o' the siller sheen,
 Her skin like snawy drift,
 Sae white that day.

Quoth she, " I ferly unco sair,
 " That ye sud musand gae,
 " Ye wha hae sung o' Hallow-fair,
 " Her winter pranks and plays;
 " Whan on Leith-sands the racers rare,
 " Wi' jockey louns are met,
 " Their orro pennies there to ware,
 " And drown themsel's in debt
 " Fu' deep that day."

An wha are ye my winsome dear,
 That takes the gate sae early?
 Whare do ye win, gin ane may spear,
 For I right meikle ferly,
 That sic braw buskit laughing lass
 Thir bonny blinks shou'd gie,
 An' loup like Hebe o'er the grass,
 As wanton and as free
 Frae dule this day?

" I dwell among the caller springs
 " That wect the Land o' Cakes,
 " And aften tune my canty strings
 " At bridals and late-wakes.
 " They ca' me MIRTH; I ne'er was kend
 " To grumble or look sour,
 " But blythe wad be a lift to lend,
 " Gin ye wad sey my pow'r
 " An' pith this day."

A bargain be't, and, by my fegs,
 Gif ye will be my mate,

" Come, hafe a care (the Captain cries),
 " On guns your bagnets thraw;
 " Now mind your manual exercise,
 " And marsh down raw by raw."
 And as they march he'll glowr about,
 'Tent a' their cuts and scars;
 'Mang them fell mony a gausy snout
 Has gusht in birth-day wars,
 Wi' blude that day.

Her nanesel maun be carefu' now,
 Nor maun she be misleard,
 Sin baxter lads hae seal'd a vow
 To skelp an' clout the guard;
 I'm sure Auld Reikie kens o' nane
 That would be sorry at it,
 Tho' they should dearly pay the kane,
 An' get their tails weel sautit
 An' sair thir days.

The tinkler billies i' the Bow
 Are now less eident clinking,
 As langs their pith or siller dow,
 They're daffin and they're drinking.
 Bedown Leith-walk what bourochs reel
 O' ilka trade and station,
 That gar their wives an' childer feel
 Toom wames for their libation
 O' drink thir days.

'The browster wives thegither harl
 A' trash that they can fa' on;
 They rake the grounds o' ilka barrel,
 To profit by the lawen:
 For weel wat they a skin leal het
 For drinking needs nae hire;

At drumly gear they tak nae pet ;
 Foul water slockens fire,
 And druth thir days.

They say ill ale has been the deid
 O' mony a beirdly lown ;
 Then dinna gape like gleds wi' greed
 To sweel hail bickers down ;
 Gin Lord send mony ane the morn,
 They'll ban fu' sair the time
 That e'er they toutit aff the horn,
 Which wambles thro' their wame
 Wi' pain that day.

The Buchan bodies thro' the beech
 Their bunch o' Findrums cry,
 An' skirl out baul', in Norland speech,
 " Guid speldings fa' will buy?"
 An', by my saul, they're nae wrang gear
 To gust a stirrah's mow ;
 Weel staw'd wi' them he'll never spear
 The price o' being fu'
 Wi' drink that day.

Now wyly wights at rowly powl,
 An' flingan' o' the dice,
 Here break the banes o' mony a soul
 W' fa's upo' the ice:
 At first the gate seems fair an' straught
 Sae they had fairly till her ;
 But wow ! in spite o' a' their maught,
 They're rookit o' their siller
 An' gowd that day.

Around where'er you fling your een,
 The haiks like wind are scourin' ;

Some chaises honest folk contain,
 An' some hae mony a whore in;
 Wi' rose and lilly, red and white,
 They gie themselves sic fit airs,
 Like Dian they will seem perfite;
 But it's nae gowd that glitters
 Wi' them thir days.

The lion here wi' open paw,
 May cleek in mony hunder,
 Wha geck at Scotland and her law,
 His wyly talons under;
 For ken, tho' Jamie's laws are auld,
 (Thanks to the wise recorder!)
 His lion yet roars loud and bauld,
 To had the whigs in order
 Sae prime this day.

To town-guard drum, of clangour clear,
 Baith men and steeds are raingit;
 Some liv'ries red or yellow wear,
 And some are tartan spraingit;
 And now the red, the blue e'en-now,
 Bids fairest for the market;
 But, ere the sport be done, I trow
 Their skins are gayly yarkit
 And peel'd thir days.

Siclike in Pantheon debates,
 Whan twa chiels hae a pingle;
 E'en now some coulie gets his aits,
 An' dirt wi' words they mingle;
 Till up louns he wi' diction fu',
 There's lang and dreech contesting;

For now they're near the point in view,
 Now ten miles frae the question
 In hand that night.

The races o'er, they hale the dools
 Wi' drink o' a' kin-kind;
 Great feck gae hirpling hame like fools,
 'The cripple lead the blind.
 May ne'er the canker o' the drink
 E'er mak our spirits thrawart,
 'Case we git wharewitha' to wink
 Wi' een as blue's a blawart
 Wi' straits thir days!



THE FARMER'S INGLE.

Et multo in primis hilarans convivia Baccho,
 Ante focum, si frigus erit. VIRG. BUC.

WHAN gloming grey out o'er the welkin keeks,
 Whan Batie ca's his owsen to the byre,
 Whan 'Thrasher John, sair dung, his barn-dore steeks,
 And lusty lasses at the dighting tire:
 What bangs fu' leal the e'enings coming cauld,
 And gars snaw-tapit winter freeze in vain;
 Gars dowie mortals look baith blythe and bauld,
 Nor fley'd wi' a' the poortith o' the plain;
 Begin, my Muse, and chant in hamely strain.
 Frae the big stack, weel winnow't on the hill,
 Wi' divets theekit frae the weet and drift,
 Sods, peats, and heath'ry trufs the chimley fill,
 And gar their thick'ning smeck salute the lift;
 The gudeman, new come hame, is blythe to find,
 Whan he out o'er the the halland flings his een,



Wi' butter'd bannocks now the girdle recks:
I' the far nook the Bowie briskly reams &c
Farmers Ingle.

I. Denholm del.

K. Mackenzie sculp. London.

Engraved for Chapman & Lang's Edition of Fergusson's Poems 1800.



That ilka turn is handled to his mind,
 That a' his housie looks sae cosh and clean;
 For cleanly house loes he, tho' e'er sae mean.

Weel kens the gudewife that the pleughs require
 A heartsome meltith, and refreshing synd

O' nappy liquor, o'er a bleezing fire:

Sair wark and poortith douna weel be join'd.

Wi' butter'd bannocks now the girdle reeks:

I' the far nook the bowie briskly reams;

The readied kail stands by the chimley cheeks,

And had the riggin' het wi' welcome streams;

Whilk than the daintiest kitchen nicer seems.

Frae this lat gentler gabs a lesson lear;

Wad they to labouring lend an eident hand,

They'd rax fell strang upo' the simplest fare,

Nor find their stamacks ever at a stand.

Fu' hale and healthy wad they pass the day,

At night in calmest slumbers dose fu' sound,

Nor doctor need their weery life to spae,

Nor drugs their noddle and their sense confound,

Till death slips sleely on, and gie the hindmost wound.

On sicken food has mony a doughty deed

By Caledonia's ancestors been done;

By this did mony a wight fu' weirlike bleed

In brulzies frae the dawn to set o' sun;

'Twas this that brac'd their gardies, stiff an' strang,

That bent the deidly yew in ancient days,

Laid Denmark's daring sons on yird along,

Gar'd Scottish thristles bang the Roman bays:

For near our crest their heads they doughtna raise.

The couthy cracks begin whan supper's o'er,

The cheering bicker gars them glibly gash

O' simmer's showery blinks and winter's sour,
 Whase floods did erst their mailin's produce hash.
 'Bout kirk an' market eke their tales gae on,
 How Jock woo'd Jenny here to be his bride,
 And there how Marion, for a bastart son,
 Upo' the cutty-stool was forc'd to ride,
 The waefu' scald o' our Mess John to bide.

The sient a chiep's amang the bairnies now,
 For a' their anger's wi' their hunger gane:
 Ay maun the childer, wi' a fastin' mou',
 Grumble and greet, and make an unco mane.
 In rangels round before the ingle's low,
 Frae Gudame's mouth auld warld tale they hear,
 O' warlocks louping round the wirrikow,
 O' gaists that win in glen and kirk-yard drear,
 Whilk touzles a' their tap, and gars them shak wi' fear.

For weel she trows that fiends and fairies be
 Sent frae the de'il to fleetch us to our ill;
 That ky hae tint their milk wi' evil eie,
 And corn been scowder'd on the glowing kill.
 O mock nae this, my friends! but rather mourn,
 Ye in life's brawest spring wi' reason clear,
 Wi' eild our idle fancies a' return,
 And dim our dolefu' days wi' bairnly fear;
 The mind's ay cradled when the grave is near.

Yet thrift, industrious, bides her latest days,
 Tho' age her sair dow'd front wi' runkles wave,
 Yet frae the russet lap the spindle plays,
 Her e'ning stent reels she as weel's the lave.
 On some feast-day, the wee-things buskit braw
 Shall heeze her heart up wi' a silent joy,

Fu' cadgie that her head was up and saw
 Her ain spun cleething on a darling oy,
 Careless tho' death shou'd mak thè feast her foy:

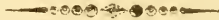
In its auld lerroch yet the deas remains,
 Whare the gudeman aft strecks him at his ease,
 A warm and canny lean for weary banes
 O' lab'ers doil'd upon the wintry leas:
 Round him will badrins and the colly come,
 To wag their tail, and cast a thankfu' eie
 To him wha kindly flings them mony a crum
 O' kebbock whang'd, and dainty fadge to prie;
 This a' the boon they crave, and a' the fee.

Frae him the lads their morning council tak,
 What stacks he wants to thrash, what rigs to till;
 How big a birn maun lie on bassie's back,
 For meal and multure to the thirling mill.
 Neist the gudewife her hireling damsels bids
 Glour thro' the byre, and see the hawkies bound,
 Tak tent case crummy tak her wonted tids,
 And ca' the laiglen's treasure on the ground,
 Whilk spills a kebbock nice, or yellow pound.

Then a' the house for sleep begins to grien,
 Their joints to slack frae industry a while;
 The leaden god fa's heavy on their ein,
 And hafflin steeks them frae their daily toil:
 The cruizy too can only blink and bleer,
 The restit ingle's done the maist it dow;
 Tacksman and cottar eke to bed maun steer,
 Upo' the cod to clear their drumly pow,
 Till waken'd by the dawning's ruddy glow.

Peace to the husbandman and a' his tribe,
 Whase care fells a' our wants frae year to year!

Lang may his sock and couter turn the glybe!
 And bauks o' corn bend down wi' laded ear!
 May Scotia's simmers ay look gay and green,
 Her yellow har'st frae scowry blasts decreed!
 May a' her tenants sit fu' snug and bein,
 Frae the hard grips o' ails and poortith freed,
 And a lang lasting train o' peaceful hours succeed!



THE ELECTION.

Nunc est bibendum, et bendere BICKERUM magnum;
 Cavete TOWN-GUARDUM, D——l G—dd—m atque
 C—pb——m.

REJOICE, ye burghers, ane an' a',
 Lang look't for's come at last;
 Sair war your backs held to the wa'
 Wi' poortith an' wi' fast:
 Now ye may clap your wings an' craw,
 And gayly busk ilk' feather,
 For deacon cocks hae pass'd a law
 'To rax an' weet your leather
 Wi' drink thir days,

Haste Epps, quo' John, and bring my gizz!
 Tak tent ye dinna't spulzie;
 Last night the barber gae't a frizz,
 An' straitit it wi' ulzie.
 Hae done your paritch, lassie Lizz,
 Gie me my sark an' gravat;
 I'se be as braw's the deacon is
 Whan he taks affidavit
 O' faith the day.

Whare's Johnny gaun, cries neebour Bess,
 That he's sae gayly bodin,
 Wi' new kaim'd wig, weel syndet face,
 Silk hose, for hamely hodin?
 " Our Johnny's nae sma' drink you'll guess,
 " He's trig as ony muir-cock,
 " An' forth to mak a deacon, lass;
 " He downa speak to poor fock
 " Like us the day."

The coat ben-by i' the kist-nook,
 That's been this towmonth swarmin,
 Is brought yence mair thereout to look,
 To fleg awa the vermin;
 Menzies o' moths an' flaes are shook,
 An' i' the floor they howder,
 Till in a birn beneath the crook
 They're singet wi' a scowder
 To death that day.

'The canty cobler quats his sta',
 His rozet an' his lingans;
 His buik has dreed a sair, sair fa'
 Frae meals o' bread an' ingans:
 Now he's a pow o' wit an' law,
 An' taunts at soals an' heels;
 To Walker's he can rin awa,
 There whang his creams an' jeels
 Wi' life that day.

The lads in order tak their seat,
 (The de'il may clay the clungest!)
 They stegh an' connoch sae the meat,
 Their teeth mak mair than tongue haste;
 Their claes sae cleanly tight an' feat,
 An' eke their craw-black beavers,

Like masters mows hae found the gate
 To tassels teugh wi' slavers
 Fu' lang that day.

The dinner done, for brandy strang
 They cry to weet their thrapple,
 To gar the stamack bide the bang,
 Nor wi' its ladin' grapple.

The grace is said—its nane o'er lang;
 The claret reams in bells;

Quo' Deacon let the toast round gang,
 "Come here's our noble sel's
 " Weel met the day."

Weels me o'drink quo' Cooper Will,
 My barrel has been geyz'd ay,
 An' has na gotten sic a fill
 Sin' fu' on Hansel-Teysday;
 But makes-na, now it's got a sweel,
 Ae gird I shanna cast lad,
 Or else I wish the horned de'il
 May Will wi' kittle cast dad
 To h—ll the day.

The magistrates fu' wyly are,
 Their lamps are gayly blinkin,
 But they might as lieve burn elsewhare,
 Whan fock's blind fu' wi' drinkin.
 Our Deacon wadna ca' a chair,
 The foul ane durst him na-say;
 He took shanks-naig, but fient may care!
 He arslins kiss'd the causey
 Wi' bir that night

Weel loes me o' you, souter Jock,
 For tricks ye buit be trying,
 Whan greapin for his ain bed-stock,
 He fa's whare Will's wife's lying:

Will coming hame wi' ither fock,
 He saw Jock there before him;
 Wi' maister laiglen, like a brock,
 He did wi' stink maist smore him
 Fu' strang that night.

Then wi' a souple leathern whang
 He gart them fidge and girn ay,
 " Faith, chiel, ye's nae for naething gang,
 " Gin ye maun reel my pirny."
 Syne wi' a muckle alshin lang
 He brogit Maggie's hurdies;
 An' cause he thought her i' the wrang,
 There pass'd nae bonny wordies
 'Tween them that night.

Now, had some laird his lady fand
 In sic unseemly courses,
 It might hae loos'd the haly band,
 Wi' law-suits an' divorces:
 But the neist day they a' shook hands,
 And ilka crack did sowder,
 While Meg for drink her apron pawns,
 For a' the gude-man cow'd her
 Whan fu' last night.

Glowr round the cawsey, up an' down,
 What mobbing and what plotting!
 Here politicians bribe a lown
 Against his saul for voting.
 The gowd that inlakes half a crown
 Thir blades lug out to try them,
 They pouch the gowd, nor fash the town
 For weights an' scales to weigh them
 Exact that day.

Then Deacons at the counsel stent
 To get themsel's presentit:
 For towmonths twa their saul is lent,
 For the town's gude indentit:
 Lang's their debating thereanent,
 About protests they're bauthrin;
 While Sandy Fife, to mak content,
 On bells plays, *Clout the Caudron*,
 To them that day.

Ye lowns that troke in doctor's stuff,
 You'll now hae unco slaisters;
 Whan windy blaws their stamacks puff,
 They'll need baith pills and plaisters;
 For tho' e'en-now they look right bluff,
 Sic drinks, ere hillocks meet,
 Will hap some deacons in a truff,
 Inrow'd in the lang leet
 O' death yon night.

TO THE TRON KIRK BELL.

WANWORDY, crazy, dinsome thing,
 As e'er was fram'd to jow or ring,
 What gar'd them sic in steeple hing
 They ken themsel',
 But weel wat I they coudna bring
 War sounds frae hell.

What de'il are ye? that I should bann,
 Your neither kin to pat nor pan;
 Nor ugly pig, nor maister cann,
 But weel may gie

Mair pleasure to the ear o' man
 Than stroke o' thee.

Fleece merchants may look baul' I trow,
 Sin' a' Auld Reikie's childer now
 Maun stap their lugs wi' teats o' woo,
 Thy sound to bang,
 And keep it frae gawn thro' and thro'
 Wi' jarrin' twang.

Your noisy tongue, there's nae abidin't,
 Like scalding wife's, there is nae guidin't:
 Whan I'm 'bout ony bis'ness eident,
 It's sair to thole:
 To deave me, than, ye tak a pride in't
 Wi' senseless knoll.

O! were I provost o' the town,
 I swear by a' the pow'rs aboon,
 I'd bring ye wi' a reesle down;
 Nor shou'd you think
 (Sae sair I'd crack an' clour your crown)
 Again to clink.

For whan I've toom'd the meikle cap,
 And fain wad fa' owr in a nap,
 Troth I cou'd doze as soun's a tap,
 Wer't na for thee
 That gies the tither weary chap
 To wauken me.

I dream't ae night I saw Auld Nick;
 Quo' he, "This bell o' mine's a trick,
 " A wyly piece o' politic,
 " A cunnin snare
 " To trap fock in a cloven stick,
 " Ere they're aware.

“ As lang’s my dautit bell hings there,
 “ A’ body at the kirk will skair;
 “ Quo’ they, gif he that preaches there
 “ Like it can wound,
 “ We douna care a single hair
 “ For joyfu’ sound.”

If magistrates wi’ me wud ’gree,
 For ay tongue-tackit shou’d ye be,
 Nor fleg wi’ anti-melody

Sic honest fock,

Whase lugs were never made to dree
 Thy doolfu’ shock.

But far frae thee the bailies dwell,
 Or they wou’d scunner at your knell:
 Gie the foul thief his riven bell,
 And than, I trow,
 The by-word hads, “ The de’il himsel’
 “ Has got his due.”



MUTUAL COMPLAINT OF PLAINSTANES AND CAUSEY,

IN THEIR MOTHER-TONGUE.

SIN’ Merlin laid Auld Reikie’s causey,
 And made her o’ his wark right saucy,
 The spacious street and plainstanes
 Were never kend to crack but anes,
 Whilk happened on the hinder night,
 Whan * Fraser’s uly tint its light;
 O’ highland sentries nane were waukin,
 To hear their cronies glibly taukin;

* The Contractor for the lamps.

For them this wonder might hae rotten,
 And, like night robb'ry, been forgotten,
 Had na a cadie, wi' his lanthron
 Been gleg enough to hear them bant'rin,
 Wha came to me neist morning early,
 To gie me tidings o' this ferly.

Ye taunting lowns, trow this nae joke,
 For anes the ass of Balaam spoke,
 Better than lawyers do, forsooth,
 For it spake naething but the truth!
 Whether they follow its example,
 You'll ken best whan you hear the sample.

Plainstones. My friend, thir hunder years and mair
 We've been forfoughen late and air,
 In sunshine, and in weety weather,
 Our thrawert lot we bure thegither.
 I never growl'd, but was content
 Whan ilk an had an equal stent,
 But now to flyte I'se e'en be bauld,
 Whan I'm wi' sic a grievance thrall'd.
 How haps it, say, that mealy bakers,
 Hair-kaimers, crieshy gizy-makers,
 Shou'd a' get leave to waste their powders
 Upo' my beaux and ladies shoulders?
 My travellers are fley'd to deid
 Wi' creels wanchancy, heap'd wi' bread,
 Frae whilk hing down uncanny nicksticks;
 That aften gie the maidens sic licks,
 As mak them blythe to skreen their faces
 Wi' hats and muckle maun bon-graces,
 And cheat the lads that fain wad see
 The glances o' a pauky eie,
 Or gie their loves a wylie wink,
 That erst might lend their hearts a clink!

Speak, was I made to dree the ladin
 O' Gallic chairman heavy treadin,
 Wha in my tender buke bore holes
 Wi' wacfu' tackets i' the soals
 O' broggs, whilk on my body tramp,
 And wound like death at ilka clamp?

Causey. Weil crackit, friend—It aft hads true,
 Wi' naething fock make maist ado:
 Weel ken ye, tho' you doughtna tell,
 I pay the sairest kain my sell;
 Owr me ilk day big waggons rumble,
 And a' my fabric birze and jumble;
 Owr me the muckle horses gallop,
 Eneugh to rug my very saul up;
 And coachmen never trow they're sinning,
 While down the street their wheels are *spinnin*
 Like thee, do I not bide the brunt
 O' Highland chairman's heavy dunt?
 Yet I hae never thought o' breathing
 Complaint, or making din for naething.

Plainstones. Had sae, and let me get a word in,
 Your back's best fitted for the burden;
 And I can eithly tell you why,
 Ye're doughtier by far than I;
 For whin-stanes howkit frae the craigs,
 May thole the prancing feet o' naigs,
 Nor ever fear uncanny hotches
 Frae clumsy carts or hackney coaches,
 While I, a weak an' feckless creature,
 Am moulded by a safer nature.
 Wi' mason's chissel dightel neat,
 To gar me look baith clean and feat,
 I scarce can bear a sairer thump
 Than come frae sole o' shoe or pump,

I grant, indeed, that now and than,
 Yield to a patten's pith I maun;
 But pattens, tho' they're aften plenty,
 Are ay laid down wi' feet fu' tenty,
 And strokes frae ladies though they're teasing,
 I freely maun avow are pleasing.

For what use was I made, I wonder?
 It was na tamely to chap under
 The weight o' ilka codroch chiel,
 That does my skin to targets peel;
 But gin I guess aright my trade is
 To fend frae skaith the bonny ladies,
 To keep the bairnies frée frae harms
 Whan airing i' their nurses arms,
 To be a safe an' canny bield
 For growing youth or drooping eild.

Tak then frae me the heavy load
 O' burden-bearers heavy shod,
 Or, by my troth, the gude-auld town sall
 Hae this affair before the council.

Causey. I dinna care a single jot,
 Tho' summon'd by a shelly-coat;
 Sae leally I'll propone defences,
 As get ye flung for my expences;
 Your libel I'll impugn *verbatim*,
 And hae a *magnum damnum datum*;
 For tho' frae Arthur's Seat I sprang,
 And am in constitution strang,
 Wad it na fret the hardest stane
 Beneath the Luckenbooths to grane?
 Tho' magistrates the cross discard,
 It makes na whan they leave the guard!
 A lumbbersome and stinkin bigging,
 That rides the sairest on my rigging.

Poor me owr meikle do yè blame,
 For tradesmen tramping on your wame,
 Yet a' your advocates and braw fock,
 Come still to me 'twixt ane and twa 'clock,
 And never yet were kent to range
 At Charlie's statue or Exchange.
 Then tak your beaux and macaronies,
 Gie me trades-fock and country Johnies;
 The de'ils in't gin ye dinna sign
 Your sentiments conjunct wi' mine.

Plainstones. Gin we twa cou'd be as auld-farrant,
 As gar the council gie a warrant,
 Ilk lown rebellious to tak,
 Wha walks not i' the proper track,
 And o' three shillings Scottish souk him,
 Or in the water-hole sair douk him,
 This might assist the poor's collection,
 And gie baith parties satisfaction.

Causey. But first, I think it will be good
 To bring it to the Robinhood*,
 Whare we sall hae the question stated,
 And keen and crabbitly debated,
 Whether the provost and the bailies,
 For the town's gude whase daily toil is,
 Shou'd listen to our joint petitions,
 And see obtemper'd the conditions.

Plainstones. Content am I—But east the gate is
 The Sun, wha taks his leave o' Thetis,
 And come's to waken honest fock,
 That gang to wark at sax o'clock;
 It sets us to be dumb a while,
 And let our words gie place to toil.

* Now called the Pantheon.

A DRINK ECLOGUE.

LANDLADY, BRANDY, AND WHISKY.

ON auld worm-eaten skelf, in cellar dunk,
 Whare hearty benders synd their drouthy trunk,
 Twa chappin bottles, pang'd wi' liquor fu',
 Brandy the tane, the tither Whisky blue,
 Grew canker'd; for the twa were het within,
 An' het-skin'd fock to flyting soon begin;
 The Frenchman fizz'd, and first wad fit the field,
 While paughty Scotsman scorn'd to beenge or yield.

Brandy. Black be your fa! ye cottar loun mislear'd,
 Blawn by the Porters, Chairman, City-Guard;
 Hae ye na breeding, that you cock your nose
 Against my sweetly gusted cordial dose.
 Ive' been near pauky courts, and aften there
 Hae ca'd hystericks frae the dowy fair;
 And courtiers aft gaed greening for my smack,
 To gar them bauldly glour, and gashly crack.
 The priest, to bang mishanters black and cares,
 Has sought me in his closet for his prayers.
 What tig then takes the fates, that they can thole
 Thrawart to fix me i' this weary hole,
 Sair fash'd wi' din, wi' darkness, and wi' stinks,
 Whare cheery day-light thro' the mirk ne'er blinks.

Whisky. But ye maun be content, and maunna rue,
 Tho' erst ye've bizz'd in bonny madam's mou';
 Wi' thoughts like thae your heart may sairly dunt,
 The warld's now change, its nae like use and wont;
 For here, wae's me! there's nouthier lord nor laird
 Come to get heartscad frae their stamack skair'd;
 Nae mair your courtier louns will shaw their face,
 For they glour eiry at a friend's disgrace;

But heeze your heart up—Whan at court you hear
 The patriot's thrapple wat wi' reaming beer;
 Whan chairman, weary wi' his daily gain,
 Can synd his whistle wi' the clear champaign;
 Be hopefu', for the time will soon row round.
 Whan you'll nae langer dwell beneath the ground.

Brendy. Wanwordy gowk! did I sae aften shine
 Wi' gowden glister thro' the chrystal fine,
 To thole your taunts, that seenil hae' been seen
 Awa frae luggie, quegh, or truncher treein;
 Gif honour wad but lat, a challenge shou'd
 Twine ye o' Highland tongue and Highland blude;
 Wi' cairds like thee I scorn to file my thumb,
 For pentle spirits gentle breeding doom.

Whisky. Truly I think it right you get your alms,
 Your high heart humbled amang common drams:
 Braw days for you, whan fools, newfangle fain,
 Like ither countries better than their ain;
 For there ye never saw sic chancy days,
 Sic balls, assemblies, operas, or plays;
 Hame-o'er langsyne you hae been blythe to pack
 Your a' upon a sarkless soldier's back;
 For you thir lads, as weel-lear'd trav'lers tell,
 Had sell'd their sarks, gin sarks they'd had to sell.

But worth gets poortith an' black burning shame,
 To daunt and drivel out a life at hame.
 Alake! the by-word's owr weel kent throughout;
 "Prophets at hame are held in nae repute;"
 Sae fair'st wi' me, tho' I can heat the skin,
 And set the saul upo' a mirry pin,
 Yet I am hameil, there's the sour mischance!
 I'm na frae Turkey, Italy, or France;
 For now our gentles gabs are grown sae nice,
 At thee they toot, an' never spear my price:

Witness—for thee they height their tenants rent,
 And fill their lands wi' poortith, discontent;
 Gar them o'er seas for cheaper mailins hunt,
 An' leave their ain as bare's the Cairn-o'-mount.

Bran. Tho' lairds tak toothfu's o' my wamring sap,
 This dwines not tenants gear, nor cows their crap;
 For love to you there's mony a tenant gaes
 Bare-ars'd and barefoot o'er the Highland braes:
 For you nae mair the thrifty gudewife sees
 Her lasses kirn, or birze the dainty cheese;
 Crummie nae mair for Jenny's hand will crune,
 Wi' milkness dreeping frae her teats adown:
 For you owr ear' the ox his fate partakes,
 And fa's a victim to the bluidy aix.

Whisky. Wha is't that gars the greedy banker prieve
 The maiden's tocher, but the maiden's leave:
 By you when spulzied o' her charming pose,
 She tholes in turn the taunt o' cauldribe joes;
 Wi' skelps like this fock sit but seenil down
 To wether-gammon or howtowdy brown;
 Sair dung wi' dule, and fley'd for coming debt,
 They gar their mou'-bits wi' their incomes met,
 Content enough gif they hae wherewithal
 Scrimply to tack their body and their saul.

Brandy. Frae some poor poet, o'er as poor a pot,
 Ye've lear'd to crack sae crouse, ye haveril Scot,
 Or burgher politician, that embrues
 His tongue in thee, and reads the claiking news;
 But waes heart for you! that for ay maun dwell
 In poet's garret, or in chairman's cell,
 While I shall yet on bein-clad tables stand,
 Bouden wi' a' the daintiths o' the land.

Whisky. Troth I hae been ere now the poet's flame,
 And heez'd his sangs to mony blythsome theme,

Wha was't gar'd ALLIE's chaunter chirm fu' clear,
 Life to the saul, and music to the ear?
 Nae stream but kens, and can repeat the lay
 'To shepherds streekit on the simmer-brae,
 Wha to their whistle wi' the lav'rock bang,
 'To wauken flocks the rural fields amang.

Bran. But here's the browster-wife, and she can tell
 Wha's win the day, and wha shou'd wear the bell;
 Hae done your din, an' let her judgement join
 In final verdict 'twixt your plea and mine.

Landlady. In days o' yore I cou'd my living prize,
 Nor fash'd wi' dolefu' gaugers or excise;
 But now-a-days we're blyth to lear the thrift
 Our heads 'boon licence and excise to lift;
 Inlakes o' Brandy we can soon supply
 By Whisky tinctur'd wi' the saffron's dye.

Will you your breeding threep, ye mongrel loun!
 Frae hame-bred liquor dy'd to colour brown?
 So flunky braw, whan drest in maister's claise,
 Struts to Auld Reikie's cross on sunny days,
 'Till some auld comrade, ablins out o' place,
 Near the vain up-start shaws his mcagre face;
 Bumbaz'd he louns frae sight, and jooks his ken,
 Fley'd to be seen amang the tassel'd train.

To the PRINCIPAL and PROFESSORS of the University of St. AN-
DREWS, on their superb Treat to Dr. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

ST. Andrews town may look right gawsy,
 Nae grass will grow upc' her causey,
 Nor wa'-flow'r o' a yellow dye,
 Glour dowy o'er her ruin's high,

Sin' Sammy's head weel pang'd wi' lear
 Has seen the *Alma Mater* there:
 Regents, my winsome billy boys!
 'Bout him ye've made an unco noise;
 Nae doubt for him your bells wad clink
 To find him upon Eden's brink,
 An' a things nicely set in order,
 Wad keep him on the Fifer border:
 I'se warrant now, frae France an' Spain,
 Baith cooks an' scullions mony ane
 Wad gar the pats an kettle's tingle
 Around the college kitchen ingle,
 To fleg frae a' your craigs the roup,
 Wi' reeking het an' creeshy soup;
 And snails and puddocks mony hunder
 Wad beeking lie the hearth-stane under,
 Wi' roast and boil'd, an' a' kin kind,
 To heat the body, cool the mind.

But hear, my lads! gin I'd been there,
 How I'd hae trimm'd the bill o' fare!
 For ne'er sic surly wight as he
 Had met wi' sic respect frae me.
 Mind ye what Sam, the lying loun!
 Has in his dictionar laid down!
 That aits in England are a feast,
 To cow and horse, an' sicken beast,
 While in Scots ground this growth was common
 To gust the gab o' man an' woman.

Tak tent ye Regents! then an' hear
 My list o' gudely hamil gear,
 Sic as hae aften rax'd the wame
 O' blyther fallows mony time,
 Mair hardy, souple, steeve, an' swank
 Than ever stood on Sammy's shank.

Imprimis, then, a haggis fat,
 Weel tottl'd in a seything pat,
 Wi' spice an' ingans weel ca'd thro',
 Had help'd to gust the stirrah's mow,
 An plac'd itsell in truncher clean
 Before the gilpy's glowrin een.

Secundo, then, a gude sheep's head,
 Whase hide was singit, never flead,
 And four black trotters clad wi' grisle,
 Bedown his throat had learn'd to hirsle.
 What think ye neist, O gude fat brose,
 To clag his ribs? a dainty dose!
 And white and bloody puddins routh,
 To gar the Doctor skirl o' drouth!
 Whan he cou'd never houp to merit
 A cordial glass o' reaming claret,
 But thraw his nose, and brize and pegh
 O'er the contents o' sma' ale quegh;
 Then let his wisdom girn an' snarl
 O'er a weel-tostit girdle farl,
 An' learn, that, maugre o' his wame,
 Ill bairns are ay best heard at hame,

Drummond, lang syne, o' Hawthornden,
 The wyliest an' best o' men,
 Has gien you dishes ane or mae,
 That wad hae gar'd his grinders play,
 Not to roast beef, auld England's life;
 But to the auld East Nook of Fife *,
 Whare Craillian crafts cou'd weel hae gi'en
 Scate rumples to hae clear'd his een;
 'Than neist, whan Sammy's heart was faintin,
 He'd lang'd for scate to make him wanton.

* Alluding to two tunes under these titles.

Ah ! willawin's for Scotland now,
 Whan she maun stap ilk birky's mow
 Wi' eistacks, grown as 'tware in pet
 In foreign land, or green-house het,
 Whan cog o' brose an' cutty spoon
 Is a' our cottar childer's boon,
 Wha thro' the week, till Sunday's speal,
 Toil for pease-clods an' gude lang kail.

Devall then, Sirs, and never send
 For daintiths to regale a friend,
 Or, like a torch at baith ends burning,
 Your house'll soon grow mirk and mourning!

* What's this I hear some cynic say!
 Robin, ye loun! it's nae fair play;
 Is there nae ither subject rife
 To clap your thumb up' but Fife?
 Gie o'er, young man, you'll meet your coming,
 Than caption war, or charge o' horning;
 Some canker'd, surly, sour-mou'd carline
 Bred near the abbey of Dumfarline,
 Your shoulders yet may gie a lounder,
 An' be of verse the mal-confounder.

Come on, ye blades! but ere ye tulzie,
 Or hack our flesh wi' sword or gulzie,
 Ne'er shaw your teeth, nor look like stink,
 Nor o'er an' empty bicker blink;
 What weets the wizen an' the wame
 Will mend your prose, and heal my rhyme.

* Our author here alludes to a misunderstanding he had with a gentleman, a native of Dunfermline, who took amiss the concluding reflection in the Expedition to Fife so much, that he sent him a challenge, but which our author treated with great contempt.

E L E G Y

On JOHN HOGG, late Porter to the University of
ST. ANDREWS.

DEATH, what's ado? the de'il belicket,
Or wi' your stang you ne'er had pricket,
Or our auld *Alma Mater* tricket
 O' poor John Hogg,
And trail'd him ben thro' your mark wicket
 As dead's a log.

Now ilka glaikit scholar loun
May dander wae wi' duddy gown;
Kate Kennedy* to dowy crune
 May mourn and clink,
And steeples o' St. Andrews town
 To yird may sink.

Sin' Pauly 'Tam †, wi' canker'd snout,
First held the students in about,
To wear their claes as black as soot,
 They ne'er had reason,
'Till Death John's haffit gae a clout
 Sae out o' season.

Whan regents met at common schools,
He taught auld Tam to hale the dules,
And eident to row right the bowls,
 Like ony emmack;
He kept us a' within the rules
 Strict academic

* A bell in the College steeple.

† A name given by the students, at that time, to one of the members of the University.

“ But on the waters coshly sit
 “ Fu’ steeve and lasting;
 “ An’ was na he a head o’ wit
 “ At sic contesting!”

On einings cauld wi’ glee we’d trudge
 To heat our shins in Johnny’s lodge;
 The de’il ane thought his bum to budge
 Wi’ siller on us :
 To claw het pints we’d never grudge
 O’ *molationis*.

Say, ye red gowns! that aften here
 Hae toasted cakes to Katie’s beer,
 Gin e’er thir days hae had their peer,
 Sae blythe, sae daft!
 You’ll ne’er again in life’s career
 Sit ha’f sae saft.

Wi’ haffit locks sae smooth and sleek,
 John look’d like ony ancient Greek;
 He was a Naz’rene a’ the week,
 And doughtna tell out,
 A bawbee Scots to scrape his check
 Till Sunday fell out,

For John ay loo’d to turn the pence,
 Thought poortith was a great offence:
 “ What recks tho’ ye ken mood and tense?
 “ A hungry wame
 “ For gowd wad wi’ them baith dispense
 “ At ony time.

“ Ye ken what ails maun ay befall
 “ The chiel that will be prodigal;
 “ Whan wasted to the very spaul
 “ He turns his tusk,

Now whan the dawning's near, whan cock maun crow,
 And wi' his angry bougill gar's withdraw,
 Ayont the kirk we'll stap, and there tak bield,
 While the black hours our nightly freedom yield.

Herriot. I'm we'll content; but binna cassen down,
 Nor trow the cock will ca' ye hame o'er soon,
 For tho' the eastern lift betakens day,
 Changing her rokelay black for mantle grey,
 Nae weirlike bird our knell of parting rings,
 Nor sheds the caller moisture frae his wings.
 Nature has chang'd her course; the birds o' day
 Dozen in silence on the bending spray,
 While owlets round the craigs at noon-tide flee,
 And bludy hawks sit singan on the tree.
 Ah, Caledon! the land I yence held dear,
 Sair mane mak I for thy destruction near;
 And thou, Edina! anes my dear abode,
 Whan royal Jamie sway'd the sovereign rod,
 In thae blest days, weel did I think bestow'd
 'To blaw thy poortith by wi' heaps o' gowd;
 'To mak thee sonsy seem wi' mony a gift,
 And gar thy stately turrets speel the lift:
 In vain did Danish Jones, wi' gimcrack pains,
 In Gothic sculpture fret the pliant stanes:
 In vain did he affix my statue here,
 Brawly to busk wi' flow'rs ilk coming year;
 My tow'rs are sunk, my lands are barren now,
 My fame, my honour, like my flow'rs, maun dow.

Watson. Sure Major Weir, orsome sic warlock wight,
 Has flung beguillin' glamour o'er your sight;
 Or else some kittle cantrip thrown, I ween,
 Has bound in mirlygoes my ain twa ein,
 If ever aught frae sense cou'd be believ'd
 (And secuil hac my senses been deceiv'd)

This moment, o'er the tap o' Adam's tomb,
 Fu' easy can I see your chiefest dome:
 Nae corbie fleecin' there, nor croupin' craws,
 Seem to forspeak the ruin o' thy haws,
 But a' your tow'rs in wonted order stand,
 Steeve as the rocks that hem our native land.

Herriot. Think na I vent my well-a-day in vain,
 Kent ye the cause, ye sure wad join my mane.
 Black be the day that e'er to England's ground
 Scotland was eikit by the Union's bond;
 For mony a menzie o' destructive ills
 The country now maun brook frae mortmain-bills,
 That void our test'ments, and can freely gie
 Sic will and scoup to the ordain'd trustee,
 That he may tir our stateliest riggins bare,
 Nor acres, houses, woods, nor fishins spare,
 Till he can lend the stoitering state a lift
 Wi' gowd in gowpins as a grassum gift;
 In lieu o' whilk, we maun be well content
 To tyne the capital for three per cent.

A doughty sum indeed, whan now-a-days
 They raise provisions as the stents they raise,
 Yoke hard the poor, and lat the rich chieils be,
 Pamper'd at ease by ither's industry.

Hale interest for my fund can scanty now
 Cleed a' my callants backs, and stap their mou':
 How maun their wames wi' sairest hunger slack,
 Their duds in targets flaff upo' their back,
 Whan they are doom'd to keep a lasting Lent,
 Starving for England's weel at three per cent!

Watson. Auld Reikie than may bless the gowden
 Whan honesty and poortith baith are crimes: (times,
 She little kend, whan you and I endow'd
 Our hospitals for back-gaun burghers gude,

That e'er our siller or our lands shou'd bring
 A gude bien living to a back-gaun king:
 Wha, thanks to Ministry! is grown say wise,
 He downa chew the bitter cud of vice;
 For gin, frae Castlehill to Netherbow,
 Wad honest houses bawdy-houses grow,
 'The Crown wad never speer the price o' sin,
 Nor hinder younkers to the de'il to rin!
 But gif some mortal green for pious fame,
 And leave the poor man's pray'r to sain his name,
 His gear maun a' be scatter'd by the claws
 O' ruthless, ravenous, and harpy laws.
 Yet, shou'd I think, altho' the bill tak place,
 'The Council winna lack sae meikle grace,
 As lat our heritage at wanworth gang,
 Or the succeeding generations wrang
 O' braw bien maintenance and wealth o' lear,
 Whilk else had drappit to their children's skair;
 For mony a deep, and mony a rare engine
 Hae sprung frae Herriot's wark, and sprung frae mine.

Herriot. I find, my friend, that ye but little ken,
 There's e'en now on the earth a set o' men,
 Wha, if they get their private pouches liu'd,
 Gie nae a winnelstrae for a' mankind;
 They'll sell their country, flae their conscience bare,
 To gar the weigh-bauk turn a single hair.
 The Government need only bait the line
 Wi' the prevailing flee, the gowden coin;
 'Than our executors, and wise trustees,
 Will sell them fishes in forbidden seas,
 Upo' their dwining country girn in sport,
 Laugh i' their sleeve, and get a place at court.

Wats. Ere that day come, I'll 'mang our spirits pick
 Some ghaist that trokes and conjures wi' Auld Nick,

To gar the wind wi' rugher rumbles blaw,
 And weightier thuds than ever mortal saw:
 Fire-flaught and hail, wi' tenfauld fury's fires,
 Shall lay yerd-laigh Edina's airy spires:
 Tweed shall rin rowtin' down his banks out o'er,
 Till Scotland's out o' reach o' England's pow'r;
 Upo' the briny Borean jaws to float,
 And mourn in dowy saughs her dowy lot.

Herriot. Yonder's the tomb o' wise Mackenzie fam'd,
 Whase laws rebellious bigotry reclaim'd,
 Freed the hale land o' covenanting fools,
 Wha erst hae fash'd us wi' unnumber'd dools;
 Till night we'll tak the swaird aboon our pows,
 And than, whan she her ebon chariot rows,
 We'll travel to the vault wi' stealing stap,
 And wauk Mackenzie frae his quiet nap;
 Tell him our ails, that he, wi' wonted skill,
 May fleg the schemers o' the mortmain bill.

[The preceding poem was written about the time a bill was in agitation for vesting the whole funds of Hospitals, and other Charities throughout the kingdom, in government stock at three per cent.]

TO MY AULD BREEKS.

Now gae your wa's—Tho' anes as gude
 As ever happit flesh and blude,
 Yet part we maun—The case sae hard is,
 Amang the writers and the bardies,
 That lang they'll brook the auld I trow,
 Or neighbours cry, "Weel brook the new."
 Still making tight wi' tither steek,
 The tither hole, the tither eik,

To bang the birr o' winter's anger
 And had the hurdies out o' langer.

Siclike some weary wight will fill
 His kyte wi' drogs frae doctor's bill,
 Thinking to tack the tither year
 To life, and look baith hail an fier,
 Till at the lang-run Death dirks in,
 To birze his saul ayont his skin.

You needna wag your duds o' clouts,
 Nor fa' into your dorty pouts,
 'To think that erst you've hain'd my tail
 Frae wind and weet, frae snaw and hail,
 And for reward, whan bauld and hummil,
 Frae garret high to dree a tumble.
 For you I car'd, as lang's ye dow'd
 Be lin'd wi' siller or wi' gowd:
 Now to befriend, it wad be folly,
 Your raggit hide and pouches holey;
 For wha but kens a poet's placks
 Get mony weary flaws an' cracks,
 And canna thole to hae them tint,
 As he sae seenil sees the mint?
 Yet round the warld keek and see,
 'That ithers fare as ill as thee;
 For weel we loe the chiel we think
 Can get us tick, or gie us drink,
 'Till o' his purse we've seen the bottom,
 'Than we despise, and hae forgot him.

Yet gratefu' hearts, to make amends,
 Will ay be sorry for their friends,
 And I for thee—As mony a time
 Wi' you I've speel'd the braes o' rhime,
 Whare for the time the Muse ne'er cares
 For siller, or sic guilefu' wares,

Wi' whilk we drumly grow, and crabbit,
 Dour, capernoited, thrawin gabbit,
 And brither, sister, friend and fae,
 Without remeid o' kindred, slae.

You've seen me round the bickers reel
 Wi' heart as hale as temper'd steel,
 And face sae apen, free and blyth,
 Nor thought that sorrow there cou'd kyth;
 But the neist moment this was lost,
 Like gowan in December's frost.

Cou'd prick-the-louse but be sae handy
 As mak the breeks and claise to stand ay,
 Thro' thick and thin wi' you I'd dash on,
 Nor mind the folly o' the fashion:
 But, hegh! the times' *vicissitudo*
 Gars ither breeks decay as you do.
 The macaronies, braw and windy,
 Maun fail—*Sic transit gloria mundi!*

Now speed you to some maiden's chaumer,
 That butt an' ben rings dule an' clamour,
 Ask her, in kindness, if she seeks
 In hidling ways to wear the breeks?
 Safe you may dwall, tho' mould and motty,
 Beneath the veil o' under coatie,
 For this mair fauts nor your's can screen
 Frae lover's quickest sense, his ein.

Or gif some bard, in lucky times,
 Shou'd profit meikle by his rhimes,
 And pace awa', wi' smirky face,
 In siller or in gowden lace,
 Glowr in his face, like spectre gaunt,
 Remind him o' his former want,
 To cow his daffin and his pleasure,
 And gar him live within the measure.

So, Philip, it is said, who wou'd ring
 O'er Macedon a just and gude king,
 Fearing that power might plume his feather,
 And bid him stretch beyond his tether,
 Ilk morning to his lug wad ca'
 A tiny servant o' his ha',
 To tell him to improve his span,
 For Philip was, like him, a Man.



A U L D R E I K I E.

AULD Reikie, wale o' ilka town
 That Scotland kens beneath the moon!
 Whare couthy chiels at e'ening meet
 Their bizzing craigs and mous to weet;
 And blythly gar auld care gae by
 Wi' blinkit and wi' bleering eye:
 O'er lang frae thee the Muse has been
 Sae frisky on the simmer's green,
 Whan flowers and gowans wont to glent
 In bonny blinks upo' the bent;
 But now the leaves o' yellow dye,
 Peel'd frae the branches, quickly fly;
 And now frae nouthier bush nor brier
 The spreckl'd mavis greets your ear;
 Nor bonny blackbird skims and roves
 To seek his love in yonder groves.

Then Reikie, welcome! Thou canst charm
 Unfleggit by the year's alarm;
 Not Boreas, that sae snelly blows,
 Dare here pap in his angry nose:
 'Thanks to our dads, whase biggin stands
 A shelter to surrounding lands.

Now morn, wi' bonny purple smiles,
 Kisses the air-cock o' St. Giles;
 Rakin their ein, the servant lasses
 Early begin their lies and clashes;
 Ilk tells her friend o' saddest distress,
 That still she brooks frae scawling mistress,
 And wi' her joe in turnpike stair
 She'd rather snuff the stinking air,
 As be subjected to her tongue,
 When justly censur'd i' the wrong.

On stair wi' tub, or pat in hand,
 The barefoot housemaids loe to stand,
 That antrin fock may ken how snell
 Auld Reikie will at morning smell:
 Then, with an inundation big as
 The burn that 'neath the Nor' Loch brig is,
 They kindly shower Edina's roses,
 To quicken and regale our noses.
 Now some for this, wi' satire's leesh,
 Hae gi'en auld Edinbrough a creesh:
 But without souring nocht is sweet;
 The morning smells that hail our street,
 Prepare and gently lead the way
 To simmer canty, braw and gay:
 Edina's sons mair eithly share
 Her spices and her dainties rare,
 Than he that's never yet been call'd
 Aff frae his plaidie or his fauld.

Now stair-head critics, senseless fools,
 Censure their aim, and pride their rules,
 In Luckenbooths wi' glouring eye,
 Their neighbours sma'est fauts descry:
 If ony loun shou'd dander there,
 O' aukward gate, and foreign air:

They trace his steps, till they can tell
His pedigree as weel's himsell.

Whan Phoebus blinks wi' warmer ray,
And schools at noon-day get the play,
'Then, bus'ness, weighty bus'ness, comes,
The trader glours; he doubts, he hums:
The lawyers eke to cross repair,
Their wings to shaw, and toss an air:
While busy agent closely plies,
And a' his kittle cases tries.

Now night, that's cunzied chief for fun,
Is wi' her usual rites begun;
Thro' iika gate the torches blaze,
And globes send out their blinkin rays.
The usefu' cadie plies in street,
To bide the profits o' his feet,
For by thir lads Auld Reikie's fock
Ken but a sample o' the stock
O' thieves, that nightly wad oppress,
And mak baith goods and gear the less.
Near him the lazy chairman stands,
And wats na how to turn his hands;
Till some daft birky, ranting fu',
Has matters somewhare else to do;
'The chairman willing gi'es his light
'To deeds o' darkness and o' night.

It's never saxpence for a lift
That gars thir lads wi' fu'ness rift;
For they wi' better gear are paid,
And whores and culls support their trade.

Near some lamp-post, wi' dowy face,
Wi' heavy ein, and sour grimace,
Stands she that beauty lang had kend,
Whoredom her trade, and vice her end.

But see whare now she wins her bread
 By that which Nature ne'er decreed;
 And vicious ditties sings to please
 Fell Dissipation's votaries.

Whane'er we reputation lose,
 Fair chastity's transparent gloss!
 Redemption seenil kens the name,
 But a's black misery and shame.

Frae joyous tavern, reeling drunk,
 Wi' fiery phiz, and ein half sunk,
 Behad the bruiser, fae to a'
 That in the reek o' gardies fa'
 Close by his side, a feckless race
 O' macaronies shaw their face,
 And think they're free frae skaith or harm,
 While pith befriends their leader's arm:
 Yet fearfu' aften o' their maught,
 They quit the glory o' the faught
 To this same warrior wha led
 Thae heroes to bright honour's bed;
 And aft the hack o' honour shines
 In bruiser's face wi' broken lines:
 O' them sad tales he tells anon,
 Whan ramble and whan fighting's done;
 And, like Hectorian, ne'er impairs
 The brag and glory o' his sairs.

Whan feet in dirty gutters plash,
 And foek to wale their fitstaps fash;
 At night the macaroni drunk,
 In pools and gutters aftimes sunk:
 Hegh! what a fright he now appears,
 Whan he his corpse dejected rears!
 Look at that head, and think if there
 The pomet slaister'd up his hair!

The cheeks observe, where now cou'd shine
 The scansing glories o' carmine!
 Ah, legs! in vain the silk-worm there
 Display'd to view her eident care;
 For stink, instead of perfumes, grow,
 And clarty odours fragrant flow.

Now some to porter, some to punch,
 Some to their wife, and some their wench,
 Retire, while noisy ten-hours' drum
 Gars a' your trades gae dand'ring home.
 Now mony a club, jocose and free,
 Gie a' to merriment and glee:
 Wi' sang and glass, they fley the pow'r
 O' care that wad harrass the hour:
 For wine and Bacchus still bear down
 Our thrawart fortune's wildest frown;
 It maks you stark, and bauld, and brave,
 E'en whan descending to the grave.

Now some, in Pandemonium's* shade,
 Resume the gormandizing trade;
 Whare eager looks, and glancing ein,
 Forspeak a heart and stamack keen.
 Gang on, my lads; it's lang sin syne
 We kent auld Epicurus' line;
 Save you the board wad cease to rise,
 Bedight with daintiths to the skies;
 And salamanders cease to swill
 The comforts o' a burning gill.

But chief, O Cape!* we crave thy aid,
 To get our cares and poortith laid:
 Sincerity, and genius true,
 O' knights have never been the due:

* Two social clubs.

Mirth, music, porter deepest dy'd,
 Are never here to worth deny'd;
 And health, o' happiness to the queen,
 Blinks bonny, wi' her smile serene.

Tho' joy maist part Auld Reikie owns,
 Eftsoons she kens sad sorrow's frowns:
 What groupe is yon sae dismal, grim,
 Wi' horrid aspect, cleeding dim?
 Says Death they're mine, a dowy crew,
 To me they'll quickly pay their last adieu.

How come mankind, whan lacking woe,
 In Saulie's face their hearts to show,
 As if they were a clock to tell
 That grief in them had rung her bell?
 Then, what is man? why a' this phrase?
 Life's spunk decay'd nae mair can blaze.
 Let sober grief alane declare
 Our fond anxiety and care;
 Nor let the undertakers be
 The only waefu' friends we see.

Come on, my Muse, and then rehearse
 The gloomiest theme in a' your verse;
 In mornings when ane keeks about,
 Fu' blythe and free frae ail, nae doubt
 He lippens na to be misled
 Among the regions o' the dead:
 But straight a painted corp he sees,
 Lang streekit 'neath its canopies.
 Soon, soon will this his mirth controul,
 And send d——n to his soul:
 Or whan the dead-dale, (awfu' shape!)
 Makes frighted mankind girn an' gape,
 Reflection than his reason sours,
 For the neist dead-dale may be ours.

When Sybil led the Trojan down
 To haggard Pluto's dreary town,
 Shapes war nor thae, I freely ween,
 Cou'd never meet the sogers' ein.

If kail sae green, or herbs, delight,
 Edina's street attracts the sight;
 Not Covent-garden, clad sae braw,
 Mair fouth o' herbs can eithly shaw:
 For mony a yard is here sair sought,
 That kail and cabbage may be bought,
 And healthfu' sallad to regale,
 Whan pamper'd wi' a heavy meal.
 Glow'r up the street at simmer morn,
 The birk sae green, and sweet-brier thorn,
 Wi' spraingit flow'rs that scent the gale,
 Ca' far awa the morning smell,
 Wi' which our ladies' flow'r-pats fill'd,
 And every noxious vapour kill'd.
 O nature! canty, blythe and free,
 Whare is there keeking-glass like thee?
 Is there on earth that can compare
 Wi' Mary's shape and Mary's air,
 Save the empurpl'd speck that grows
 In the saft faulds o' yonder rose?
 How bonny seems the virgin breast,
 Whan by the lilies here carest,
 And leaves the mind in doubt to tell
 Which maist in sweets and hue excel?

Gillespie's snuff shou'd prime the nose
 O' her that to the market goes,
 If she wad like to shun the smells
 That buoy up frae market cells;
 Whare wames o' painches' sav'ry scent
 To nostrils gie great discontent.

Now wha in Albion could expect
 O' cleanliness sic great neglect?
 Nae Hottentot that daily lairs
 'Mang tripe and ither dirty wares,
 Hath ever yet conceiv'd, or seen
 Beyond the line, sic scenes unclean.

On Sunday here, an alter'd scene
 O' men and manners meets our ein;
 Ane wad maist trow some people chose
 To change their faces wi' their clo'es,
 And fain wad gar ilk neighbour think
 'They thirst for goodness as for drink;
 But there's an unco dearth o' grace,
 That has nae mansion but the face;
 And never can obtain a part
 In benmost corner o' the heart.
 Why shou'd religion mak us sad,
 If good frae Virtue's to be had?
 Na, rather gleefu' turn your face;
 Forsake hypocrisy, grimace;
 And never hae it understood
 You fleg mankind frae being good.

In afternoon, a' brawly buskit,
 The joes and lasses loe to frisk it:
 Some tak a great delight to place
 The modest bon-grace o'er the face;
 Tho' you may see, if so inclin'd,
 The turning o' the leg behind.
 Now Comely-garden, and the Park,
 Refresh them, after forenoon's wark;
 Newhaven, Leith, or Canon-mills,
 Supply them in their Sunday's gills:
 Whare writers aften spend their pence,
 To stock their heads wi' drink an' sense.

While dand'ring cits delight to stray
 To Castlehill, or public way,
 Whare they nae other purpose mean,
 Than that foul cause o' being seen;
 Let me to Arthur's Seat pursue,
 Whare bonny pastures meet the view;
 And mony a wild-lorn scene accrues,
 Befitting Willie Shakespeare's muse:
 If Fancy there would join the thrang,
 The desert rocks and hills amang,
 To echoes we should lilt and play,
 And gie to Mirth the live-lang day.

Or shou'd some canker'd biting show'r
 The day and a' her sweets deflow'r,
 To Holyrood-house let me stray,
 And gie to musing a' the day;
 Lamenting what auld Scotland knew
 Bien days for ever frae her view:
 O Hamilton, for shame! the Muse
 Wad pay to thee her couthy vows
 Gin ye wad tent the humble strain,
 And gie's our dignity again:
 For O, waes me! the thistle springs
 In domicile o' ancient kings,
 Without a patriot to regret
 Our palace and our ancient state.

Blest place whare debtors daily run,
 To rid themsels frae jail and dun;
 Here, tho' sequester'd frae the din
 That rings Auld Reikie's wa's within,
 Yet they may tread the sunny braes,
 And brook Apollo's cheary rays;
 Glowr frae St. Anthon's grassy height,
 O'er vales in simmer claise bedight,

Nor ever hing their head, I ween,
 Wi' jealous fear o' being seen.
 May I, whanever duns come nigh,
 And shake my garret wi' their cry,
 Scour here wi' haste, protection get,
 To screen mysel' frae them and debt;
 To breathe the bliss o' open sky,
 And Simon Fraser's* bolts defy.

Now gin a lown should hae his claise
 In thread-bare autumn o' their days,
 St. Mary, broker's guardian saint,
 Will satisfy ilk ail and want;
 For mony a hungry writer there
 Dives down at night wi' cleeding bare,
 And quickly rises to the view
 A gentleman perfyte and new.
 Ye rich fock, look na wi' disdain:
 Upo' this ancient brokage lane!
 For naked poets are supply'd
 With what you to their wants deny'd.

Peace to thy shade, thou wale o' men,
 Drummond! relief to poortith's pain:
 To thee the greatest bliss we owe,
 And tribute's tear shall grateful flow:
 The sick are cur'd, the hungry fed,
 And dreams o' cömfort tend their bed.
 As lang as Forth weets Lothian's shore,
 As lang's on Fife her billows roar,
 Sae lang shall ilk whase country's dear,
 To thy remembrance gie a tear.
 By thee Auld Reikie thrave and grew
 Delightfu' to her childer's view:

* The late keeper of the Tolbooth.

Nae mair shall Glasgow striplins threep
 Their city's beauty and its shape,
 While our new city spreads around
 Her bonny wings on fairy ground.

But Provosts now that ne'er afford
 The sma'est dignity to lord,
 Ne'er care tho' ev'ry scheme gae wild
 That Drummond's sacred hand has cull'd:
 The spacious Brig* neglected lies,
 Tho' plagu'd wi' pamphlets, dunn'd wi' cries;
 They heed not tho' destruction come
 To gulp us in her gaunting womb.
 O shame! that safety canna claim
 Protection from a provost's name,
 But hidden danger lies behind
 To torture and to fleg the mind;
 I may as weel bid Arthur's Seat
 To Berwick-Law mak gleg retreat,
 As think that either will or art
 Shall get the gate to win their heart;
 For politics are a' their mark,
 Bribes latent, and corruption dark;
 If they can eithly turn the pence,
 Wi' city's good they will dispense;
 Nor care tho' a' her sons were lair'd
 Ten fathom i' the auld kirk-yard.
 To sing yet meikle does remain,
 Undecent for a modest strain;
 And sin' the poet's daily bread is,
 The favour o' the Muse or ladies,
 He downa like to gie offence
 To delicacy's bonny sense;

* The author here alludes to the state of the North Bridge, after its fall.

Therefore the stews remain unsung,
And bawds in silence drap their tongue.

Reikie, far'ewel! I ne'er cou'd part
Wi' thee but wi' a dowy heart;
Aft frae the Fifan coast I've seen
Thee tow'ring on thy summit green,
So glowr the saints when first is given
A fav'rite keek o' glore and heaven;
On earth nae mair they bend their ein,
But quick assume angelic mien;
So I on Fife wad glowr no more,
But gallop'd to Edina's shore.

H A M E C O N T E N T.

A SATIRE.

To all whom it may concern.

SOME fock, like bees, fu' glegly rin
To bikes bang'd fu' o' strife and din,
And thieve and huddle crumb by crumb,
Till they have scrap'd the dautit Plumb,
Then craw fell crously o' their wark,
Tell o'er their turners mark by mark,
Yet dare na think to lowse the pose,
To aid their neighbours ails and woes.

Gif gowd can fetter thus the heart,
And gar us act sae base a part,
Shall Man a niggård, near-gaun elf!
Rin to the tether's end for pelf;
Learn ilka cunzied scoundrel's trick,
Whan a's done sell his saul to Nick:

I trow they've coft the purchase dear,
That gang sic lengths for warldly gear.

Now when the Dog-day heats begin
To birsle and to peel the skin,
May I lie streekit at my ease,
Beneath the caller shady trees,
(Far frae the din o' Borrowstown,)
Whare water plays the haughs bedown;
To jouk the simmer's rigour there,
And breathe a while the caller air,
'Mang herds, an' honest cottar fock,
That till the farm an' feed the flock;
Careless o' mair, who never fash
To lade their kist wi' useless cash,
But thank the gods for what they've sent,
O' health eneugh, and blythe content,
An' pith that helps them to stravaig
Owr ilka cleugh an' ilka craig;
Unkend to a' the weary granes
That aft arise frae gentler banes,
On easy chair that pamper'd lie,
Wi' banefu' viands gustit high,
And turn an' fauld their weary clay,
To rax an' gaunt the live-lang day.

Ye sages tell, was man e'er made
To dree this hatefu' sluggard trade?
Steekit frae Nature's beauties a'
That daily on his presence ca';
At hame to girn, and whinge, and pine
For fav'rite dishes, fav'rite wine:
Come, then, shake aff thir sluggish ties,
And wi' the bird o' dawning rise!
On ilka bank the clouds hae spread.
Wi' blobs o' dew a pearly bed;

Frae faulds nae mair the owsen rout,
 But to the fatt'ning clover lout,
 Whare they may feed at heart's content,
 Unyokit frae their winter's stent.

Unyoke thee, man, an' binna swear
 To ding a hole in ill-hain'd gear!
 O think that eild, wi' wyly fit,
 Is wearing nearer bit by bit!
 Gin yence he claws you wi' his paw,
 What's siller for? Fiend hate ava;
 But gowden playfair, that may please
 The second sharger till he dies.

Some daft chiel reads, and taks advice;
 The chaise is yokit in a trice;
 Awa drives he like huntit de'il,
 And scarce tholes time to cool his wheel,
 Till he's, Lord kens! how far awa',
 At Italy, or well o' Spa,
 Or to Montpelier's safer air;
 For far aff fowls hae feathers fair.

There rest him weel! for eith can we
 Spare mony glaikit gowks like he;
 They'll tell whare Tiber's waters rise,
 What sea receives the drumly prize,
 That never wi' their feet hae met
 The marches o' their ain estate.

The Arno and the Tiber lang
 Hae run fell clear in Roman sang;
 But save the reverence o' schools,
 They're baith but lifeless, dowy pools.
 Dought they compare wi' bonny Tweed,
 As clear as ony lammer-bead?
 Or are their shores mair sweet and gay
 Than Fortha's haughs or banks o' Tay?

Tho' there the herds can jink the show'rs
 'Mang thriving vines an' myrtle bow'rs,
 And blaw the reed to kittle strains,
 While Echo's tongue commends their pains ;
 Like ours, they canna warm the heart
 Wi' simple saft bewitching art.
 On Leader haughs an' Yarrow braes,
 Arcadian herds wad tyne their lays,
 To hear the mair melodious sounds
 That live on our poetic grounds.

Come, Fancy! come, and let us tread
 The simmer's flow'ry velvet bed,
 And a' your springs delightfu' lowse
 On Twida's bank or Cowdenknows.
 That ta'en wi' thy enchanting sang,
 Our Scottish lads may round ye thrang,
 Sae pleas'd they'll never fash again
 To court you on Italian plain;
 Soon will they guess you only wear
 The simple garb o' Nature here;
 Mair comely far and fair to sight
 Whan in her easy cleething dight,
 Than in disguise ye was before
 On Tiber's, or on Arno's shore.

O Bangour!* now the hills and dales
 Nae mair gie back thy tender tales!
 The birks on Yarrow now deplore
 Thy mournfu' muse has left the shore:
 Near what bright burn or crystal spring
 Did you your winsome whistle hing?
 The muse shall there, wi' watry e'e,
 Gie the dunk swaird a tear for thee;

And Yarrow's genius, dowy dame!
 Shall there forget her blude-stain'd stream,
 On thy sad grave to seek repose,
 Who mourn'd her fate, condol'd her woes.

EPISTLE TO MR. ROBERT FERGUSSON.

Is Allan risen frae the dead,
 Wha aft has tun'd the aiten reed,
 And by the Muses was decreed
 To grace the thistle?
 Na! Fergusson's come in his stead
 To blaw the whistle.

In troth, my callant, I'm sae fain
 To read your sonsy, canty strain,
 You write sic easy style and plain,
 And words sae bonny,
 Nae southern loun dare you disdain,
 Or cry, Fy on ye!

Whae'er has at Auld Reikie been,
 And king's birth-day's exploits has seen,
 Maun own that ye hae gi'en a keen
 And true description;
 Nor say ye've at Parnassus been
 To form a fiction.

Hale be your heart, ye canty chield!
 May ye ne'er want a gude warm bield,
 And sic gude cakes as Scotland yield,
 And ilka dainty
 That grows or feeds upo' her field,
 And whisky plenty.

But ye, perhaps thirst mair for fame,
 Than a' the gude things I can name,
 And than ye will be fair to blame

My gude intention:
 For that ye needna gae frae hame
 You've sic pretension.

Sae saft and sweet your verses jingle,
 An' your auld words sae meetly mingle,
 'Twill gar baith married fock and single
 To roose your lays:
 Whan we forgether round the ingle,
 We'll chant your praise.

Whan I again Auld Reikie see,
 An' can forgether, lad, wi' thee,
 Then we wi' meikle mirth and glee
 Shall tak a gill,
 And o' your caller oysters we
 Shall eat our fill.

If sic a thing shou'd you betide,
 To Berwick town to tak a ride,
 I'se tak ye up Tweed's bonny side
 Before ye settle,
 And shaw you there the fisher's pride,
 A sa'mon kettle.

There lads an' lasses do convey
 To feast an' dance upo' the green,
 And there sic bravery may be seen
 As will confound ye,
 An' gar ye glowr out baith your een
 At a' around ye.

To see sae mony bosoms bare,
 An' sic huge puddins i' their hair,

An' some o' them wi' naething mair
 Upo' their tere;
 Yea, some wi' mutches that might scare
 Craws frae their meet.

I ne'er appear'd before in print,
 But for your sake wou'd fain be in't,
 E'en that I might my wishes hint
 'That you'd write mair;
 For sure your head-piece is a mint
 Whare wit's nae rare.

Sonse fa' me, gif I hadna lure
 I cou'd command ilk Muse as sure,
 Than hae a chariot at the door
 To wait upo' me;
 Tho', poet-like, I'm but a poor
 Mid-Lothian Johnnie.

Berwick, Aug. 31, 1773.

J. S.



ANSWER TO MR. J. S.'s EPISTLE.

I trow my mettl'd Louthian lathie,
 Auld farren birky I maun ca' thee,
 For whan in gude black print I saw thee
 Wi' souple gab,
 I skirl'd fu' loud, "Oh, wae befa' thee!
 "But thou'rt a dab."

Awa ye wylie fleetchin fallow!
 The rose shall grow like gowan yallow,
 Before I turn sae toom an' shallow,
 And void of fusion,
 As a' your butter'd words to swallow
 In vain delusion.

Ye mak my Muse a dautit pet:
 But gin she cou'd like Allan's met,
 Or couthy cracks and hamely get
 Upo' her carritch,
 Eithly wad I be in your debt
 A pint o' parritch.

At times whan she may lowse her pack,
 I'll grant that she can find a knack
 To gar auld-warld wordies clack
 In hamespun rhime,
 While ilk ane at his billie's back
 Keeps gude Scots time.

But she maun e'en be glad to jook,
 An' play teet-bo frae nook to nook,
 Or blush as gin she had the yook
 Upo' her skin,
 Whan Ramsay or whan Pennicuik
 Their liltis begin.

At morning ear', or late at e'en,
 Gin ye sud hap to come and see ane,
 Nor niggard wife, nor greetin wee-ane,
 Within my cloyster,
 Can challenge you and me frae preicin
 A caller oyster.

Heh, lad! it wad be news indeed,
 Ware I to ride to bonny Tweed,
 Wha ne'er laid gamon o'er a steed
 Beyont Lysterrick;
 And auld shanks-nag wad fire, I dread,
 To pace to Berwick.

You crack weel o' your lasses there,
 Their glancin een and bisket bare;

But tho' this town be smeekit sair,
 I'll wad a farden,
 Than ours there's nane mair fat an' fair;
 Cravin your pardon.

Gin heaven shou'd gie the earth a drink,
 And afterhend a' sunny blink,
 Gin ye ware here, I'm sure you'd think
 It worth your notice;
 To see them dubs and gutters jink
 Wi' kiltit coaties.

And frae ilk corner o' the nation,
 We've lasses eke o' recreation,
 Wha at close-mou's tak up their station
 By ten o'clock:
 The Lord deliver frae temptation
 A' honest fock!

Thir queans are ay upo' the catch
 For pursy, pocket-book, or watch,
 And can sae glib their leesins hatch,
 That ye'll agree
 Ye canna eithly meet their match
 'Tween you and me.

For this gude sample o' your skill,
 I'm restin you a pint o' yale,
 By an' attour a Highland gill
 O' Aquavitæ;
 The which to come and sock at will,
 I here invite ye.

Tho' jillet Fortune scoul an' quarrel,
 And keep me frae a bein beef barrel,
 As lang's I've twopence i' the warl'
 I'll ay be vockie

To part a fadge or girdle farl

Wi' Louthian jockie.

Farewel, my cock! lang may ye thrive,

Weel happit in a cozy hive;

And that your saul may never dive

To Acheron,

I'll wish as lang's I can subscribe

ROB. FERGUSSON.

POSTHUMOUS PIECES.

JOB, CHAP. III. PARAPHRASED.

PERISH the fatal day when I was born,
 The night with dreary darkness be forlorn;
 The loathed, hateful, and lamented night
 When Job, 'twas told, had first perceiv'd the light;
 Let it be dark, nor let the God on high
 Regard it with the favour of his eye;
 Let blackest darkness and death's awful shade
 Stain it, and make the trembling earth afraid;
 Be it not join'd unto the varying year,
 Nor to the fleeting months in swift career.
 Lo! let the night in solitude's dismay
 Be dumb to joy, and waste in gloom away;
 On it may twilight stars be never known;
 Light let it wish for, Lord! but give it none;
 Curse it let them who curse the passing day,
 And to the voice of mourning raise the lay;
 Nor ever be the face of dawning seen
 To ope its lustre on th' enamell'd green;

Because it seal'd not up my mother's womb,
 Nor hid from me the sorrows doom'd to come.
 Why have I not from mother's womb expir'd;
 My life resign'd when life was first requir'd?
 Why did supporting knees prevent my death,
 Or suckling breasts sustain my infant breath?
 For now my soul with quiet had been blest,
 With kings and counsellors of earth at rest,
 Who bade the house of desolation rise,
 And awful ruin strike tyrannic eyes,
 Or with the princes unto whom were told
 Rich store of silver and corrupting gold;
 Or, as untimely birth, I had not been
 Like infant who the light hath never seen;
 For there the wicked from their trouble cease,
 And there the weary find their lasting peace;
 There the poor prisoners together rest,
 Nor by the hand of injury oppress;
 The small and great together mingl'd are,
 And free the servant from his master there;
 Say, wherefore has an over-bounteous Heaven
 Light to the comfortless and wretched given?
 Why should the troubl'd and oppress'd in soul
 Fret over restless life's unsettled bowl,
 Who long for death, who lists not to their pray'r,
 And dig as for the treasures hid afar;
 Who with excess of joy are blest and glad,
 Rejoic'd when in the tomb of silence laid?
 Why then is grateful light bestow'd on man,
 Whose life is darkness, all his days a span?
 For e'er the morn return'd my sighing came,
 My mourning pour'd out as the mountain stream;
 Wild visag'd fear, with sorrow-mingled eye,
 And wan destruction piteous star'd me nigh:

For tho' no rest nor safety blest my soul,
New trouble came, new darkness, new controul.

ODE TO HORROR.

O THOU, who with incessant gloom
Courts the recess of midnight tomb!
Admit me of thy mournful throng,
'The scatter'd woods and wilds among!
If e'er thy discontented ear
The voice of sympathy can cheer,
My melancholy bosom's sigh
Shall to your mournful plaint reply;
'There to the fear-foreboding owl
'The angry furies hiss and howl;
Or near the mountain's pendant brow
Where rush-clad streams in cadent murmurs flow.

Epode. Who's he that with imploring eye
Salutes the rosy dawning sky?
'The cock proclaims the morn in vain,
His sp'rit to drive to its domain;
For morning light can but return
'To bid the wretched wail and mourn:
Not the bright dawning's purple eye
Can cause the frightful vapours fly,
Nor sultry Sol's meridian throne
Can bid surrounding fears begone;
The gloom of night will still preside,
While angry conscience stares on either side.

Strophe. To ease his sore distemper'd head,
Sometimes upon the rocky bed
Reclin'd he lies, to list the sound
Of whispering reed in vale profound.

Happy if Morpheus visits there,
 A while to lull his wo and care;
 Send sweeter fancies to his aid,
 And teach him to be undismay'd;
 Yet wretched still, for when no more
 The gods their opiate balsam pour,
 Ah, me! he starts, and views again
 The Lybian monster prance along the plain.

Now from oozing caves he flies,
 And to the city's tumults hies,
 Thinking to frolic life away,
 Be ever cheerful, ever gay:
 But tho' enwapt in noise and smoke,
 They ne'er can heal his peace when broke;
 His fears arise, he sighs again
 For solitude on rural plain;
 Even there his wishes all convey
 To bear him to his noise again.
 Thus tortur'd, rack'd, and sore oppress'd,
 He constant hunts, but never finds his rest.

Antistrophe. Oh exercise! thou healing power,
 The toiling rustic's chiefest dower;
 Be thou with parent virtue join'd
 To quell the tumults of the mind;
 Then man as much of joy can share
 From ruffian winter, bleakly bare,
 As from the pure ethereal blaze
 That wantons in the summer rays;
 The humble cottage then can bring
 Content, the comfort of a king;
 And gloomy mortals wish no more
 For wealth and idleness to make them poor.

ODE TO DISAPPOINTMENT.

THOU joyous fiend, life's constant foe,
 Sad source of care, and spring of wo,
 Soft Pleasure's hard controul;
 Her gayest haunts for ever nigh,
 Stern mistress of the secret sigh,
 That swells the murm'ring soul.

Why haunt'st thou me thro' deserts drear?
 With grief-swoln sounds why wound my ear,
 Denied to Pity's aid?
 Thy visage wan did e'er I woo,
 Or at thy feet in homage bow,
 Or court thy sullen shade?

Even now enchanted scenes abound,
 Elysian glories strew the ground,
 To lure th' astonish'd eyes;
 Now horrors, hell, and furies reign,
 And desolate the fairy scene
 Of all its gay disguise.

The passions at thy urgent call,
 Our reason and our sense enthrall
 In frenzy's fetters strong.
 And now Despair with lurid eye
 Doth meagre poverty descry,
 Subdu'd by famine long.

The lover flies the haunts of day,
 In gloomy woods and wilds to stray,
 There shuns his Jessy's scorn;
 Sad sisters of the sighing grove
 Attune their lyres to hapless love,
 Dejected and forlorn.

Yet Hope undaunted wears thy chain,
 And smiles amidst the growing pain,
 Nor fears thy sad dismay;
 Unaw'd by power her fancy flies
 From earth's dim orb to purer skies,
 Realms of endless day.

D I R G E.

THE waving yew or cypress wreath
 In vain bequeathe the mighty tear;
 In vain the awful pomp of death
 Attends the sable-shrouded bier.

Since Strephon's virtue's sunk to rest,
 Nor pity's sigh nor sorrow's strain,
 Nor magic tongue, have e'er confest
 Our wounded bosom's secret pain.

The just, the good, more honours share
 In what the conscious heart bestows,
 Than voice adorn'd with sculptor's care,
 In all the venal pomp of woes.

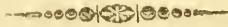
A sad-ey'd mourner at his tomb,
 Thou, Friendship! pay thy rites divine,
 And echo thro' the midnight gloom
 That Strephon's early fall was thine.

HORACE, ODE XI. LIB. I.

NE'ER fash your thumb what gods decree
 To be the weird o' you or me,
 Nor deal in cantrip's kittle cunning
 To spier how fast your days are running;

But patient lippen for the best,
 Nor be in dowy thought opprest,
 Whether we see mair winters come,
 Than this that spits wi' canker'd foam.

Now moisten weel your geyzen'd wa's
 Wi' couthy friends and hearty blaws;
 Ne'er let your hope o'ergang your days,
 For eild and thraldom never stays;
 'The day looks gash, toot aff your horn,
 Nor care yae strae about the morn.



THE AUTHOR'S LIFE.

MY life is like the flowing stream
 That glides where summer's beauties teem,
 Meets all the riches of the gale
 That on its watry bosom sail,
 And wanders 'midst Elysian groves
 Thro' all the haunts that fancy loves.

May I when drooping days decline,
 And 'gainst those genial streams combine,
 The winter's sad decay forsake,
 And center in my parent lake.



S O N G.

SINCE brightest beauty soon must fade,
 That in life's spring so long has roll'd,
 And wither in the drooping shade,
 E'er it return to native mould:

Ye virgins, sieze the fleeting hour,
 In time catch Cytherea's joy,

Ere age your wonted smiles deflow'r,
And hopes of love and life annoy.



EPIGRAM,

*On a Lawyer's desiring one of the Tribe to look with respect
to a GIBBET.*

THE lawyers may revere that tree
Where thieves so oft have strung,
Since, by the Law's most wise decree,
Her thieves are never hung.



On the AUTHOR's intention of going to Sea.

FORTUNE and Bob, e'er since his birth,
Could never yet agree,
She fairly kickt him from the earth
To try his fate at sea.

EPIGRAM,

*Written Extempore, at the desire of a Gentleman who was
rather ill-favoured, but who had a beautiful Family of
Children.*

SC-TT and his children emblems are
Of real good and evil;
His children are like cherubims,
But Sc-tt is like the devil.

THE VANITY OF HUMAN WISHES:

*An ELEGY, occasioned by the untimely DEATH of a SCOTS
POET.*

BY MR JOHN TAIT.

Quis desiderio sit pudor, aut modus,
Tam cari capitis? præcipe lugubres
Cantos, Melpomene: cui liquidam pater
Vocem cum cithara dedit.

HOR.

DARK was the night—and silence reign'd o'er all;
No mirthful sounds urg'd on the ling'ring hour:
The sheeted ghost stalk'd ghastly thro' the hall,
And ev'ry breast confess'd chill horror's pow'r:

Slumb'ring I lay: I mus'd on human hopes:

“ Vain, vain, I cry'd, are all the hopes we form;
“ When winter comes, the sweetest flow'ret drops,
“ And oaks themselves must bend before the storm.”

While thus I spake, a voice assail'd my ear,

'Twas sad—'twas slow—it fill'd my mind with dread!
“ Forbear, it cry'd—thy moral lays forbear,
“ Or change the strain, for FERGUSSON is dead!

“ Have we not seen him sporting on these plains?

“ Have we not heard him strike the Muse's lyre?

“ Have we not felt the magic of his strains,

“ Which often glow'd with fancy's warmest fire?

“ Have we not hop'd these strains would long be heard?

“ Have we not told how oft they touch'd the soul?

“ And has not Scotia said, her youthful BARD

“ Might spread her fame ev'n to the distant pole?

“ But vain, alas! are all the hopes we rais'd; [o'er;

“ Death strikes the blow—they sink—their reign is

“ And these sweet songs, which we so oft have prais’d—
 “ These mirthful strains shall now be heard no more.

“ This, this proclaims how vain are all the joys
 “ Which we so ardently wish to attain ;
 “ Since ruthless fate so oft, so soon destroys
 “ The high-born hopes ev’n of the Muses’ train.”

I heard no more—The cock, with clarion shrill,
 Loudly proclaim’d th’ approach of morning near—
 The voice was gone—but yet I heard it still—
 For every note was echo’d back by fear.

“ Perhaps, I cried, ere yonder rising sun
 “ Shall sink his glories in the western wave ;
 “ Perhaps ere then my race too may be run,
 “ And I myself laid in the silent grave.
 “ Oft then, O mortals ! oft this dreadful truth
 “ Should be proclaim’d—for fate is in the sound,
 “ That genius, learning, health and vigorous youth,
 “ May, in one day, in death’s cold chains be bound.”



mits of little variety: in the morning he leads his flock to their wonted pasture, and when the shades of evening begin to descend, again collects them in some spot where they may spend the night in safety. Few passions agitate his breast: he is no stranger to love; but his method of gaining the affections of his mistress, is such as every other shepherd adopts. The objects of nature with which he is conversant, have so often been displayed with all the glowing colours of poetry, that it would be no easy task to produce any thing new upon this subject.—Hence, the very inconsiderable number of pastoral poets, whose works are held in general estimation.

Of *The Expedition to Fife*, *The Epistle to a Friend*, and other poems of the same class, nothing very favourable can be said. The application of blank verse to trivial or ludicrous subjects, has seldom been found to succeed: The “*Splendid Shilling*” is almost the only poem of that description, which can afford pleasure in the reading. Besides the advantage of its being altogether original in the design, it possesses a kind of quaint dignity peculiar to itself.

Philips was the model which he proposed to imitate: but his versification bears a stronger resemblance to that of Trapp, or Roscommon*. The cadence of his verses is commonly the same as that of the rhyming couplet. The following passage will illustrate this observation.

From noisy bustle, from contention free,
Far from the busy town I careless loll,
Not like swain Tityrus, or the bards of old,
Under a beechen, venerable shade;

* See Trapp's “*Virgil*,” and Roscommon's “*Translation of Horace's Art of Poetry*.”

But on a furzy heath, where blooming broom
 And thorny whins the spacious plains adorn:
 Here health sits smiling on my youthful brow;
 For ere the sun, &c.

Nothing can be more fatiguing to the ear than such verses as these: the structure of every first line naturally induces us to expect a correspondent rhyme at the close of the next; but as this expectation is always disappointed, we are filled with languor and disgust.

His *Stanzas written at the Hermitage of Braid*, have been pronounced "inferior in beautiful description, and elegant versification, to none in any language." Whether this praise is to be received without certain limitations, will admit of some dispute. They are not devoid of poetical merit; but will scarcely be found entitled to unqualified commendation.

The poem *Against Repining at Fortune*, contains one passage worthy of being quoted:

Can he, who with the tide of fortune sails,
 More pleasure from the sweets of nature share?
 Do zephyrs wait him more ambrosial gales,
 Or do his groves a gayer liv'ry wear?
 To me the heav'ns unveil as pure a sky;
 To me the flow'rs as rich a bloom disclose;
 The morning beams as radiant to my eye,
 And darkness guides me to as sweet repose.

The latter of these stanzas possesses a considerable degree of suavity*;

* Among the ancients, Theocritus, Moschus, Bion, and Virgil, are the only pastoral poets whose works have obtained any considerable degree of celebrity.—The productions of Nemesian and Calpurnius, seem to merit more attention than has hitherto been bestowed upon them. Though much inferior to Virgil, they

His *Last Will* with the *Codicil* to it, may be ranked among the best of his English poems. Though far from being a correct production, it is sprightly throughout. Like Butler and Swift, he has frequently introduced double rhymes, which commonly please from their being unexpected.

The *Epilogue spoken by Mr. Wilson* is still superior to his *Last Will*; it is not only humorous and lively, but even possesses a considerable degree of vigour. Perhaps it is little inferior to many of the prologues and epilogues of Dryden.

In Mason's "Collection for the use of Schools," there is a little *Night-piece* of his, which likewise seems a tolerably happy effort.

Now murky shades surround the pole:
 Darkness lords without controul;
 To the notes of buzzing owl,
 Lions roar, and tygers howl,
 Fright'ning from their azure shrine,
 Stars that wont in orbs to shine:
 Now the sailor's storm-tost bark
 Knows no blest celestial mark,
 While in the briny troubled deep,
 Dolphins change their sport for sleep:
 Ghosts and frightful spectres gaunt,
 Church-yards dreary footsteps haunt,
 And brush with wither'd arms the dew
 That fall upon the drooping yews.

may both be read with pleasure.—The following passage is eminently beautiful.

Te sine, vae misero! mihi lilia nigra videntur,
 Pallentesque rosae, nec dulce rubens hyacinthus,
 Nullos nec myrtus, nec laurus spirat odores.
 At tu si venias, et candida lilia fient,
 Purpureaeque rosae, et dulce rubens hyacinthus,
 Tum mihi cum myrto laurus spirabit odores.

NEMESIAN, Eclog. 2.

The popularity of his Scottish poems is a strong proof of their intrinsic merit. With the exception of Ramsay's "Gentle Shepherd," no compositions of a similar description have ever been so universally admired in that part of the island where their beauties can be properly understood and relished. They have always been allowed to rank with the productions of the most celebrated Scottish poets of modern times; and on account of their native beauties, have a just claim to this distinction. They exhibit a sprightfulness of thought, and facility of expression, which have sometimes been equalled, but seldom or never surpassed. The versification is so easy and natural, that it seems to flow spontaneously, and without any kind of effort on the part of the poet. It is always smooth, and upon some occasions highly melodious. Though his subjects are frequently trivial, yet he never becomes flat or insipid: every thing that occurs is lively and entertaining. To those who affirm, that his sentiments are seldom natural, the term nature certainly cannot be supposed to convey the same signification as it does to the rest of mankind. If nature presides not here, where shall she be found?

His talent for delineating ludicrous scenes has very rarely been exceeded; yet it will be regretted that he has bestowed so much attention on that inferior species of writing; when we peruse his Odes addressed to the Bee, and to the Gowdspink. The latter of these, I consider as the best of all his works. The following passage may be produced, as no unfavourable specimen of his poetical genius.

Sure nature herried mony a tree,
For sprains and bonny spats to thee:

Nae mair the rainbow can impart
 Sic glowing ferlies o' her art,
 Whase pencil wrought its freaks at will
 On thee, the sey-piece o' her skill.
 Nae mair thro' straths in simmer dight,
 We seek the rose to bless our sight;
 Or bid the bonny wa' flowers sprout
 On yonder ruin's lofty snout,
 Thy shining garments far outstrip
 The cherries upo' Hebe's lip,
 And fool the tints that nature chose
 To busk and paint the crimson rose.

Though in these verses, a rigid critic may find something liable to censure, yet there will still be much left to commend.

The *Ode to the Bee* is also a beautiful little poem: in it, as well as in that addressed to the Gowdspink, he takes occasion to introduce a train of moral reflections, which are by no means of that hereditary kind which one race of poets hand down to another. The comparison with which it concludes, is entitled to considerable praise.

The poem on *Leith Races* is written with his usual vivacity. The first five stanzas are well calculated to take possession of the fancy. The description of his rencounter with Mirth is picturesque and appropriate: according to his own account, however, he treated the *Laughing Lass* with no great politeness; for after their first meeting, he does not pay the smallest attention to her.

The *Elegy on the death of Scots Music* is replete with tenderness and simplicity. Like Lovibond in his "Tears of Old May-Day," he introduces an imaginary personage, and bewails her hapless fate in a manner so pathetic, that every one must feel himself moved with sympathy. The personification, however

is not strictly preserved. He exhorts his countrymen to speed to battle,

And fight till Music be restored,
Whilk now lies dead.

In the former of these verses, music must be regarded as an art, and in the latter, as a nymph or goddess.

To enter upon a particular examination of his various poetical essays, would be an unnecessary task: his beauties are such as cannot fail to present themselves to the mind of every reader.

When we consider the circumstances in which he was placed, it need scarcely appear surprizing, that these beauties are sometimes blended with deformities. He always wrote *currente calamo*, and according to his own confession, could never submit to the labour of correcting his productions. Hence the inaccuracies which so frequently occur — His promiscuous use of the pronoun *thou*, and its plural *you*, has a very disagreeable effect: there is scarcely a single page of his works free from this blemish. Many other faults might, without much difficulty, be pointed out; but his compositions ought always to be treated with a certain degree of lenity. To apply the rigour of criticism to the unpremeditated effusions of such an author, would be highly absurd.

Carminis incompti tenuem lecture libellum,
Pone supercilium.

Seria contractis expendo poemata rugis.

Nos Thymelen sequimur.

AUSONIUS.

[This Life is entered in Stationers' Hall.]

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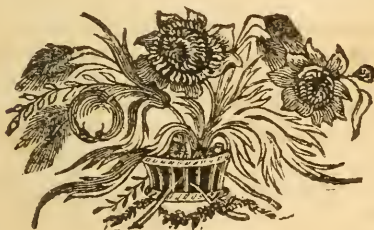
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